UNIFORMS OF THE SS

VOLUME 4
SS TOTENKOPFVERBÄNDE 1933-1945

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SS-TOTENKOPFVERBÄNDE 1933-1945

Andrew Mollo

Windrow & Greene

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SS-WACHVERBÄNDE
SS-TOTENKOPFVERBÄNDE
SS-TOTENKOPF-WACHSTURBANNE

The decree of the 28th February 1933 for the protection of people and state (Verordnung des Reichspräsidenten zum Schutze von Volk und Staat, vom 28.2.1933, RgB1.15.83), which followed the Reichstag fire, gave the police the right to place potential enemies of the state (who had been legally sentenced to prison by a court of law, or who having served a legal sentence were ordered to be further detained by the SD or Gestapo) in protective custody (Schutzhaft) for up to three months.[1] As a direct result of this decree so many so-called opponents of the regime were arrested that conventional prison accomodation was not available, and make-shift detention centres had to be set up. In April 1935 it was estimated that 25,000 people were being held in protective custody in Prussia alone.[2]

Heinrich Himmler, as acting Police President of Munich, set up in March 1923 the first independent SS-run concentration camp, on the site of a former gunpowder factory on the outskirts of Munich at Dachau.[3] In the summer of 1934 most of the unofficial camps were closed, and as a direct result of the Roehm-Putsch the remaining SA camps were removed from the jurisdiction of the civil authorities, and taken over by the SS.

The first full-time SS concentration camp unit was recruited from members of the General SS, to guard the new camp at Dachau. At first this unit was under the overall command of SS District South, who made it a depository for its unwanted personnel.[4] In June 1935, SS-Oberfürer Theodor Eicke was made commander of Dachau.[5] In a letter which he wrote to Himmler on the 10th August 1936, he described the conditions that prevailed at Dachau on his arrival.[6]

"There were times when no tunics, shoes or even socks were available. The men carried on their duties wearing their own things without complaining. We were generally regarded as a necessary evil which merely cost money; insignificant guards behind barbed wire. At times

SS-Brigadeführer Theodor Eicke, commander and inspector of SS Death's Head Units and Concentration Camps, 15th September 1936. (Bozich Collection.)

I was forced literally to beg the treasuries for the meagre wages of my officers and men. As an Oberführer in Dachau I myself received a monthly salary of RM. 230 . . . At the beginning there were no cartridges or rifles, let alone machine guns. Of the entire staff only three men could handle a machine gun. My men were billeted in draughty factories. Everywhere there was poverty and misery. At that time these guards were under the command of the SS District South which left the worries and anxieties to me but, unasked, sent me people of whom for some reason or other it wanted to be rid in Munich; in consequence they contaminated my men and their spirit, I encountered disloyalty, graft and corruption. For these reasons I was forced to dismiss about sixty men in four weeks. No progress could be made because the unit was under the command and influence of the District South and was used as a depository for so-called Versorgungsanwärter (ex-soldiers entitled to ex-servicmen's welfare benefits). When I found it impossible to continue like this the Reichsführer-SS granted my request and placed the small guard unit under my exclusive command. From then on there was uninterrupted progress. I went to work alert and happy, training men to become N.C.O's and, N.C.O's to become officers. Mutual self-sacrifice, deprivations and hearty comradeship created in a few weeks an example of manhood which in turn exhibited an excellent "esprit de corps". We did not become paranoic, because we all had nothing. Behind the barbed-wire we quietly did our duty and eliminated without concern anybody in our ranks who showed the smallest sign of disloyalty. So we formed and trained the guard unit in the quietness of the concentration camp. Their ideals were loyalty bravery and obedience."

Having improved the morale and discipline of his men, Eicke formulated service regulations for both guards and inmates, which remained virtually unchanged until the end of the war. In 1934 Eicke was made Inspector of Concentration Camps and SS Guard Units (Inspekteur der Konzentrationslager und SS-Wachverbände)*, with the rank of SS-Gruppenführer.[7]

* By 1938/9 his official title had become "Führer der SS-TV u. KL."

Dachau guard company marches into the compound. Officers and N.C.O.'s wear the black peaked cap, whereas the men wear the earth-brown field-cap. 1936.

PREFACE

The Death's Head Formations (SS-Totenkopfverbände, or SS-TV) were responsible from 1933 until 1939 with the guarding of concentration camps. The original regiments became highly disciplined, and in addition to guard duties undertook serious military training. They were consequently able to participate in the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland and the invasion of Czechoslovakia alongside the SS-Verfügungstruppe (the subject of Volume 3 in the present series). It was normal practice in all matters concerning dress and equipment to refer to the SS-VT and the SS-TV, as apart from insignia the uniform and equipment were identical; and, to all intents and purposes, from 1937 the SS-TV was considered to be part of the armed SS establishement.

In 1939 the original regiments formed the nucleus of the SS Death's Head Division (SS-Totenkopf-Division), and had nothing more to do with the guarding of concentration camps, evolving instead into one of the premier armoured formations of the Waffen-SS. Their former task was undertaken by specially formed SS Guard Battalions (SS-Totenkopf-Wachsturmbanne) under the jurisdiction of the concentration camp commandant.

Research into the concentration camps and the Security Police is not only morally more exacting for any thoughtful student, but practically more difficult than parallel research into the other armed branches. Whereas former members of the Waffen-SS are willing to come forward with memoirs and personal photographs, surviving members of the Death's Head and Security Police branches, still risking possible prosecution and imprisonment, lay very low.

I would like to thank Hugh Page Taylor, Philip Buss BA(Hons.), F. Ollenschläger, Col. C. M. Dodkins CBE, DSO(Retd.), Stanley Bozich, David Lee Delich, Jost W. Schneider, and the staff of the Wiener Library, London, for their invaluable assistance.

Note on sources

Frequent references are made in this work to documents which were collected and used as evidence in the Nuremberg trials and other post-war judicial proceedings. Those used in this work bear the prefix NO for Nazi Organisation, NOKW for Nazi Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, and USSR for a document submitted by the Soviet authorities. Each prefix is followed by the document's number. The Records of the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police are available from the National Archives in Washington, DC, and are referred to by the series prefix RFSS/T-175 followed by the roll and frame number. Unless otherwise stated all photographs and actual items used to illustrate this publication are from the author's collection.

Author's note to second edition

There has been surprisingly little published research into the SS-Totenkopfverbände since this volume first appeared in 1971. There have been a number of histories of the SS-Totenkopf-Division published in Germany, which commence with the formation of the division and carefully avoid any mention of its nursery years in the 'quietness of the concentration camp'. As it happens, the transition from concentration camp guards to élite fighting men of the Waffen-SS is of sufficient interest to warrant a detailed study of its own.

I was unaware of the part played by the police in the setting up of the concentration camps—particularly that of the Bavarian Political Police in Dachau. The executive power of the police was later represented by the physical presence in the concentration camp of an official of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, known as the Vernehmungsführer.

In the plates of insignia (Nos. 5–8) none of the cyphers worn at one time or another by all four Totenkopf regiments were illustrated. The regiments 'Oberbayern', 'Brandenburg', and 'Thüringen' wore the Gothic letters 'O', 'B' and 'T' respectively on their shoulder straps. With the formation of 'Ostmark' an new emblem was created for 'Oberbayern' while 'Ostmark' inherited the 'O', but in a smaller version (see p. 39). Further points of detail on various insignia are discussed in the Errata and Addenda (see p. 52).

Andrew Mollo
Sagonne, 1991

In March 1935 there were the following guard units (Wachverbände) in existence:

Unit:	Camp:
SS-Wachtruppe Oberbayern	Dachau
SS-Wachtruppe Ostfriesland	Esterwegen
SS-Wachtruppe Elbe	Lichtenburg
SS-Wachtruppe Sachsen	Sachsenburg
SS-Wachtruppe Brandenburg	Oranienburg und Columbia-Haus
SS-Wachtruppe Hansa	Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel

On the 1st April 1936 the scattered company-sized guard units were removed from the control of the General SS, and re-organised into five battalions each of which was assigned to a particular camp:[8]

Dachau inmates are given their assignments by the duty officer. 1936.

Unit:	Camp:
SS-Wachsturmbann I Oberbayern	Dachau
SS-Wachsturmbann II Elbe	Lichtenburg
SS-Wachsturmbann III Sachsen	Sachsenburg
SS-Wachsturmbann IV Ostfriesland	Esterwegen
SS-Wachsturmbann V Brandenburg	Oranienburg u. Columbia-Haus

On the 29th March 1936 the above units with a total strength of 3,500 men were collectively renamed the SS-Totenkopfverbände.[9] In April 1936 both the SS-Verfügungstruppe and SS-Totenkopfverbände were classified as "organisations in the service of the state", and placed on the police budget of the Ministry of the Interior.[10]

Service in the SS-TV did not count as fulfilment of the military service obligations until the Spring of 1939, and boys with the age of sixteen and above were accepted as volunteers for 4 or 12, and officers 25 years. During their service in the SS-TV volunteers had to complete their military service in either the armed forces or SS-VT. Eicke preferred his men to do their service in the army, navy or air force, as he was afraid that if they were to serve in the SS-VT, they might not want to return to the onerous task of guarding concentration camps.[11] On completion of their service in the armed forces TV personnel were reminded by Eicke that "we belong neither to the army nor the police nor the SS-Verfügungstruppe; our cohesion is based upon comradeship inherent in our National Socialist ideology."[12]

From the 1st July 1937 the five battalions were re-organised into three regiments (Standarten), with a total strength of 4,449 persons.[13]

Unit:		Camp*:
SS-Totenkopfstandarte	1 Oberbayern	Dachau
,,	2 Brandenburg	Buchenwald
,,	3 Thüringen	Sachsenhausen

In 1938 a fourth regiment was formed in Austria[14]

,,	4 Ostmark	Mauthausen

and in 1939 a fifth was added

5 Dietrich Eckhardt

* On the 1st August 1937 the seven concentration camps were re-organised into three main camps (Hauptlager).

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On the 1st April 1938 the SS-Totenkopfverbände were organised as follows:[16]

Führungsstab mit Nachrichtenstaffel	H.Q. with Signals Echelon
4 Standarten mit je drei Sturmbanne	4 rgts. each with 3 Bns. and
je 1 M.G.-Hundertschaft	1 M.G. Coy.
1 Sanitäts-Abteilung	1 Medical Battalion
1 Sanitätshundertschaft	1 Medical Company

each regiment was to have in addition:

1 Kraftfahrstaffel	1 Motor Transport Echelon
1 Nachrichtenzug	1 Signals platoon
2 Ergänzungseinheiten**	2 Supplementary units

On the 17th August, Hitler ordered that in the event of war the four regiments should be used to strengthen the police within the framework of the armed forces, and that the task of guarding camps should be taken over by older members of the General SS, aged 45 and over, who were to be called up in the Autumn for military training with the SS-TV. At the same time 10,000 younger officers and men of the General SS were to be called up as police reinforcements (Polizeiverstärkung) for the death's head regiments themselves.[17]

From October 1939 to February 1940 Dachau was cleared of inmates and used by Eicke for the formation of the SS Death's Head Division (SS-Totenkopf-Division), from the first four regiments and some of the police reinforcements. From the 1st November 1939, Eicke ceased to be Inspector of Concentration Camps, and on the 14th was appointed commander of the Death's Head Division, and as such had nothing more to do with the guarding of concentration camps. On the 16th February 1943, he was killed in Russia.

From October 1939 the death's head establishment was divided into two distinct groups. The first consisting of the four original regiments were to have nothing more (as units) to do with guarding of concentration camps. They and the police reinforcements were formed into the Death's Head Division, and 13 other Death's Head Infantry and 2 cavalry units which were used at the beginning of the war as police troops. The second group consisting of the middle-aged General SS reservists took over the duties of the concentration camp guards, and were formed into SS Death's Head Guard Battalions (SS-Totenkopf-Wachsturmbanne). These guards lived in barracks outside the main camp compound, and the camp commandant conveyed his requirements for guards to man the watchtowers and outside working parties, via his adjutant, to the duty officer of the guard battalion (Führer von Dienst, whose office was outside the camp in the barracks). The duty officer and the guard battalion were not considered as part of the camp staff until 1939, when the newly formed guard battalions became part of the camp establishment under the jurisdiction of the camp commandant. Not all SS personnel were allowed inside the camp perimeter. At Mauthausen, for example, the size of the guard varied from month to month, but of the average strength of 1,200 SS and Home Guard (Volkssturm) guards, only 50 SS men were allowed inside the camp itself.[18]

On the 22nd April 1941 an Operational Main Office (SS-Führungshauptamt) directive listed the units and offices which were to be considered part of the Waffen-SS. This list included the Inspectorate of Concentration camps and the death's head guard formations, whose personnel were now members of the Waffen-SS, with the same

** These supplementary units were established both in the army and SS when Germany reintroduced conscription, for the short-term training of those who had missed full-time national service, and were known as the "White year groups" (Weisse Jahrgänge). Most regular units had sub-units for this purpose, which disappeared on mobilisation, as both the cadres and those they had been training were swallowed up in the new wave of divisions.

uniforms, and the same pay-books (Soldbücher).[19] The significance of this directive was missed at the time, and the Waffen-SS was always to regret that it had not resisted the lumping together of its fighting formations with the concentration camp guards.

In the Summer of 1941 the concentration camp guard establishment was as follows:[20]

KL mit SS-Totenkopfsturmbann	7 Kp.* Sachsenhausen
"	4 Kp. Dachau
"	3 Kp. Buchenwald/Weimar
"	3 Kp. Mauthausen
"	4 Kp. Gusen
"	3 Kp. Flossenbürg/Bayr. Ost.
"	Neuengamme
Frauen-Kl.	Ravensbrück

Up to the outbreak if the war the primary purpose of the concentration camp had been to isolate the 'enemies of the state' from the German people, but with the outbreak of war exploitation of camp labour became of paramount importance. The growth of the camp population was relatively slow until 1941/2, when the camps were filled to bursting point with vast numbers of prisoners collected in the newly occupied eastern territories. This expansion, and the ever increasing demand for labour was too much for the Operational Main Office, under which the camps had been subordinated since August 1940, and in March 1942, the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (The inspectorate of Guard units had been disbanded in August 1940) was transferred to the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office (SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt—WVHA) under SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl as Group (Amtsgruppe) D, under SS-Brigadeführer Richard Glücks.[21]

*Kompanien or Companies

SS-Obersturmbannführer Karl Koch, commander of the IV SS Death's Head Battalion "Ostfriesland", 1936 (?). (Black Star.)

Amtsgruppe D was organised as follows in March 1942.[22]

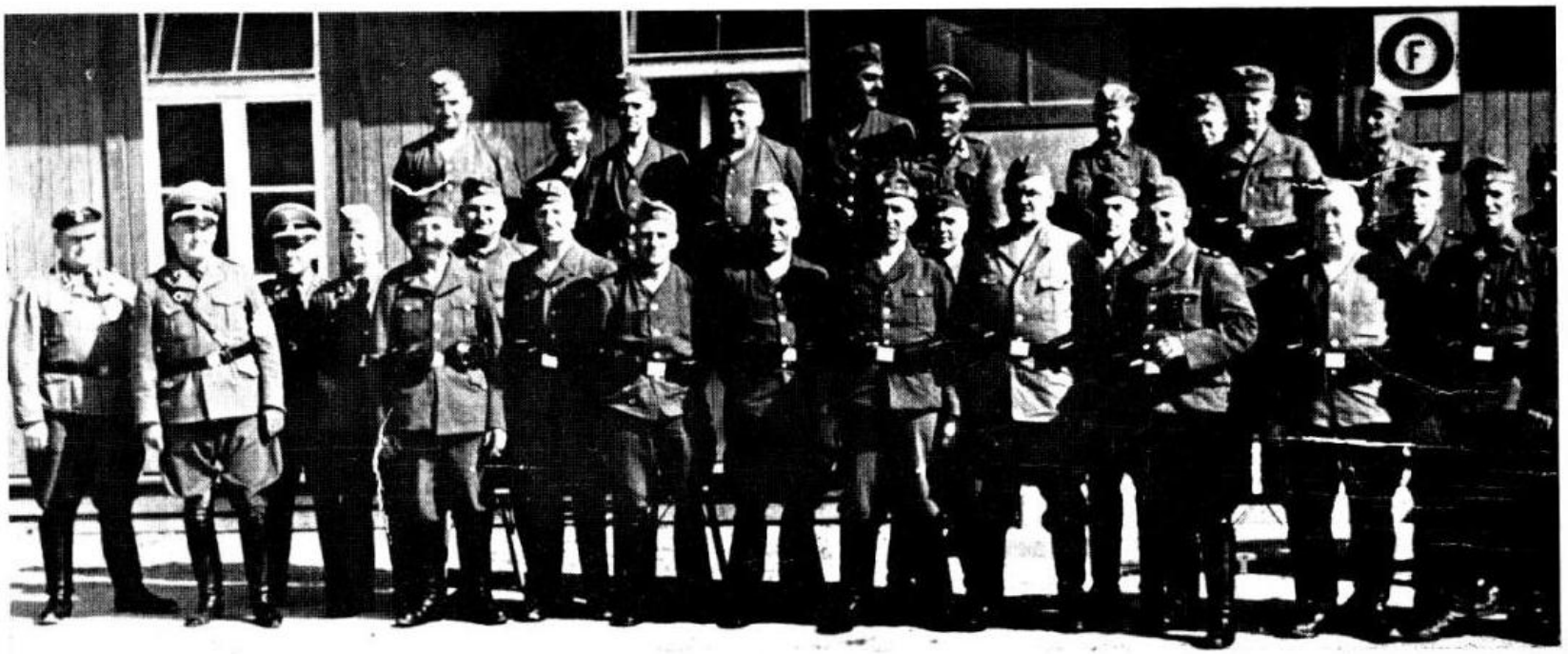
Office D: I (SS-Ostubaf. Liebehenschel)	Central Office	Zentralamt
D I/1	Inmate matters	Häftlingsangelegenheiten
D I/2	Communications, Camp security and guard dogs	Nachrichtenwesen, Lagerschutz und Wachhunde
D I/3	Motor transport	Kraftfahrwesen
D I/4	Weapons and equipment	Waffen und Geräte
D I/5	Troop training	Schulung der Truppe
Office D: II (SS-Staf. Maurer)	Inmate labour	Arbeitseinsatz der Häftlinge
D II/1	Inmate labour	Häftlingseinsatz
D II/2	Inmate training	Häftlingsausbildung
D II/3	Statistics and accounts	Statistik und Verrechung
Office D: III (SS-Staf. Dr. Dolling)	Medical matters and camp hygiene	Sanitätswesen u. Lagerhygiene
D III/1	SS Medical and dental care	Ärztliche und zahnärztliche Versorgung der SS
D III/2	Inmate medical and dental care	Ärztliche und zahnärztliche Versorgung der Häftlinge
D III/3	Camp hygiene and sanitation	Hygienische u. sanitäre Massnahmen in den KL.
Office D: IV (SS-Stubaf. Burger)	camp administration	KL-Verwaltung
D IV/1	Household, cash and pay matters	Haushalt, Kassen-u. Besoldungswesen
D IV/2	Supply	- Verpflegung
D IV/3	Clothing	Bekleidung
D IV/4	Billets and accommodation	Unterkunft
D IV/5	Legal, tax and contractual matters	Rechts- und Vertragsangelegenheiten

A Death's Head battalion, 1935 (?). (Heinrich Hoffmann.)

The wartime guard units were organised in battalions and companies which bore the name of the camp, e.g. 6./SS-Sturmbann KL. Auschwitz, was in fact the 6th company of the SS Battalion Concentration camp Auschwitz. The number of the guards depended on the size of the camp, and number of inmates, but was often remarkably small, although many of the larger camps were situated alongside SS camps or barracks, and in the case of a serious insurrection the camp commandant could call on military units in the vicinity for assistance.

In 1943/4 the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann Hamburg-Neuengamme consisted of four companies of 60 men armed with 98 K carbines. Of the 240 men, 70 were German nationals (Reichsdeutsche), 74 Rumanians, many of whom had been wounded at Stalingrad, 25 Slovaks, most of German origin, and 60 Russians, none of whom, with the exception of their N.C.O.s, could speak German.[23] At the same camp air force personnel had been taken into the SS in the summer of 1944, issued with SS uniforms and pay-books, and used to reinforce the existing guards.[24] In Sachsenhausen in April 1945 there were approximately 3.000 SS personnel, all of whom wore SS uniform.[25] Ravensbrück had 90 men on the camp staff and 250 guards in November 1942, and by April 1945 the number of guards had risen to 550 men.[26] When Rudolf Hoess assumed command of Auschwitz in May 1940, he had a staff of 15, and a guard platoon of 50 SS men, which rose to 3.500 men by the time he relinquished his command in December 1943.[22]

The original wartime guards were continuously changed, as the younger age groups were posted to field units, and replaced by even older soldiers, sailors, airmen, and especially racial Germans who were either unfit or unreliable for frontline service. These decrepit and incompetent guards were reinforced, from time to time, by members of the SA, Prison Service, and even 1st World War veterans from the Kyffhäuserbund.[28]



Officers and men of the staff of Buchenwald Concentration Camp in 1940. Judging by their age these are General SS reservists. (BozichCollection)

On the 5th April 1944 the WVHA listed 20 official concentration camps and an additional 165 subsidiary labour camps,[29] and in August 1944 reported that these camps held 524,286 inmates.[30]

The following list gives all the main camps (Hauptlager) which came under the jurisdiction of the WVHA, and which were therefore classified as "official" concentration camps.* [31]

Dachau	22. 3.33 — 29. 4.45
Sachsenhausen	8.36 — 22. 4.45
Buchenwald bei Weimar**	15. 7.37 — 11. 4.45
Flossenbürg/Bayr. Ostmark	3. 5.38 — 23. 4.45
Mauthausen	8. 8.38 — 5. 5.45
Ravensbrück	15. 5.39 — 21. 4.45
Auschwitz (Poland)***	20. 5.40 — 18. 1.45
Neuengamme	4. 6.40 — 29. 4.45
Gross-Rosen	1. 5.41 — . 2.45
Natzweiler (Alsace)	26. 7.41 — 23.11.44
Niederhagen in Wewelsburg	1. 9.41 — 3. 5.43
Stuffhof (Danzig)	13. 1.42 — 25. 1.45
Arbeitsdorf	8. 4.42 — 11.10.42
Herzogenbusch	5. 1.43 — . 9.44
Lublin (Poland)	9. 3.43 — 24. 7.44
Riga-Kaiserwald (Latvia)	15. 3.43 — 6. 8.44
Bergen-Belsen	7. 7.43 — 11. 4.45
Warschau (Poland)	15. 8.43 — 1. 5.44
Kauen (Lithuania)	15. 9.43 — 14. 7.44
Vaivara (Estonia)	15. 9.43 — 28. 6.44
Klooga (Estonia)	9.43 — 19. 9.44
Krakau-Plaszow (Poland)	11. 1.44 — 15. 1.45
Mittelbau	28.10.44 — 9. 4.45

* On the 28th May 1941 Himmler authorised IdS & BdS to form Arbeitserziehungslager at the expense of the Reich. These detention camps were to be staffed by Gestapo officials and employees and guarded by hired personnel, often by auxiliaries such as Estonian, and Lithuanian police.

** This camp was previously known as Ettersberg.

*** This camp also included Auschwitz II (Birkenau), and Auschwitz III (Monowitz).

SS-Obergruppenfuhrer Oswald Pohl, chief of the WVHA, September 1942. He wears a "Litewka", a style of tunic which became popular with senior functionaries. (Dodkins Collection.)

In May 1944 Himmler ordered the transfer of 10,000 reservists over the age of forty from the replacement army to the Waffen-SS as camp guards. The same order suggested that these reservists, and all concentration camp guards who did not meet SS membership requirements might wear a machine embroidered W on the right collar patch. It is not known if this order was in fact implemented.[32]

As the Allied armies overran German occupied Europe, and then Germany herself, camp after camp was liberated. In some the SS guards stayed to surrender, while in others they fled. In all the camps the most appalling conditions were found, due, in the great part, to the complete breakdown of the system, which resulted in Germany's collapse.

Elderly concentration camp guard, probably a "Volksdeutscher", being searched by British soldiers after the liberation of Bergen Belsen in April 1945. (Imperial War Museum.)

1. Anatomy of the SS State, p. 401.
2. Ibid, p. 406.
3. Ibid, p. 429.
4. Ibid, p. 437.
5. Ibid, p. 431.
6. Eicke to Himmler on 10.8.36, concerning SS-TV Dok.DC Pers.Akt./Eicke 37c/A.
7. Anatomy of the SS State, p. 443.
8. Ibid, p. 442.
9.
10. Soldaten wie andere auch, p. 257.
11. Nuremberg Interrogation Summary No. 4802.
12. Anatomy of the SS State, p. 331.
13. Statistisches Jahrbuch der SS der NSDAP. 1938, p. 79.
14. Die Waffen-SS, p. 345.
15. Ibid.
16. Soldaten wie andere auch., Document 6, pp. 252-259.
17. Anatomy of the SS State, p. 459.
18. IMT., Vol. VI, p. 459.
19. Zusammensetzung der Waffen-SS issued by the SS-Führungs-Hauptamt (Kommandoamt der Waffen-SS) Abt. 1a/Ne/Oe. Tgb. Nr. 2825/41 geh. Dated 16.7.41. Quoted in full in "Soldaten wie andere auch", p. 301.
20. Ibid.
21. Anatomy of the SS State, p. 461.
22. Ibid, p. 486.
23. Interrogation report No. PWIS(H)/LDC/477.
24. Nuremberg document D/748.
25. " D/745a.
26. " D/746b.
27. " D/749b.
28.
29. " NO-020.
30. " NO-399.
31. List compiled from the International Tracing Service publication "Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933-1945)."
32. Nuremberg Military Tribunals Document NO-5089.

SS-AUFSEHERINNEN
SS Women Supervisors

The first women's concentration camp was set up at Lichtenburg in August 1937, and it is thought that the recruitment and training of selected women as supervisors began at the same time.

In order to attract recruits during the war, women were offered the best accommodation and higher salaries than they could earn elsewhere. Once they had joined, new recruits were clothed and trained at Ravensbrück, where they remained, or were posted to other women's camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau. According to the commandant of Ravensbrück, Fritz Sühren, 150 women were employed in the camp itself, while approximately 300 guarded outside working parties (Aussenkommandos). Sühren estimated that during his term of service from November 1942 to May 1945, 3,500 women had served at one time or another in Ravensbrück or its outside working parties.[1]

Potential supervisors were recruited by various National Socialist women's organisations, but few women were prepared to volunteer for the concentration camp service, so compulsion had to be used to obtain the ever increasing numbers that were required. Each armaments firm to which female prisoners had been allotted for work, had in exchange, to surrender a certain percentage of their other female employees to act as supervisors. These supervisors were then given a few weeks' 'training' in Ravensbrück and then let loose on the prisoners.[2]

As a general rule women recruited during the war came under the category of War Auxiliaries (SS-Kriegshelferinnen), and were not incorporated into the Corps of SS Helpers (SS-Helferinnenkorps), members of which had to fulfill all SS recruiting standards.[3]

Women were also employed as supervisors in the Police Prison Supervisory Service (Polizeigefängnisaufsichtsdienst), and as governesses in camps for juvenile offenders (Jugendschutzlager), which came under the jurisdiction of the Chief of the Security Police and SD.[4]

1. Nuremberg Document D3746a & b.
2. Commandant of Auschwitz, pp. 137-140.
3. RFSS-Befehl von 14.8.43.
4. Befehlsblatt des Chefs der Sipo und des SD.Nr 21., 30.4.43, p. 127.

Female overseers captured by the British at Bergen Belsen in April 1945. The white brassard was probably worn as a token of surrender. (Imperial War Museum.)

SS-BAUBRIGADEN UND SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADEN
SS Construction and Railway Construction Bridges

From 1942 onwards the principal concentration camps organised mobile brigades of inmates, whose principal tasks until the end of the war, were the clearing of bomb debris, bomb disposal, and the repairing of railway lines.

The overall commander of these units, which were numbered consecutively, was the Leader of SS Construction Brigades (Führer der Baubrigaden) in office group C (Amtsgruppe C, Bauwesen) of the WVHA. The actual work was supervised by a works manager (Bauleiter), and the guards were provided by the concentration camp responsible for the brigade.

The 1st SS Construction Brigade (for abroad) (I.SS-Baubrigade für das Ausland) was formed in September/October 1942 as an outside working party from inmates of Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. From October 1942 to March 1943, the brigade was employed in and around Düsseldorf and Duisburg, and on the 22nd December 1943 was transferred to Alderney in the Channel Islands under the command of Neuengamme Concentration Camp, where it constructed gun emplacements and strong points. In July 1944 it was sent back to the Continent where it was employed in Tours, Kortemark, Sollstedt and Hohlstedt.

The brigade had a strength of some 1,000 inmates consisting of the following:

500 Russian prisoners-of-war and partisans.
180 German work-dodgers, habitual criminals, political prisoners, especially ex-members of the International Brigades in Spain.
130 Polish political prisoners.
60 Dutchmen.
25 Czechs, political prisoners and those caught attempting to join the allies.
20 Frenchmen and other nationalities.

The following brigades are known to have existed:[1]

Brigade	Formed	Camp
I. SS-Baubrigade	10.42	Sachsenhausen
II. SS-Baubrigade (u. Eisenbahnkdo.)	4.42	Neuengamme
III. SS-Baubrigade	18. 9.42	Buchenwald
IV. SS-Baubrigade	24. 8.43	Buchenwald
V. SS-Baubrigade	2. 1.43	Sachsenhausen
IX. SS-Baubrigade (Eisenbahnkdo.)	11.44	Sachsenhausen
1. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade	12. 9.44	Buchenwald
2. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade*	19. 9.44	Auschwitz
3. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade	2.10.44	Buchenwald
8. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade	21.11.44	Sachsenhausen
10. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade	2. 1.45	Buchenwald
11. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade	15. 2.45	Buchenwald
12. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade	24.12.44	Sachsenhausen
13. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade	18. 1.45	Sachsenhausen

UNIFORM

Members of SS Construction and Railway Construction Brigades wore concentration camp, or old surplus German military clothing, with their nationality or offence badge and their number. Members of the detachments assigned by the camp to guard the prisoners wore their normal uniform, with no distinctive insignia.

* Also called 7. Eisenbahnbaubrigade.

1. Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS, pp. 246-259.

INSPEKTION DER KONZENTRATIONSLAGER UND SS-WACH-VERBÄNDE
INSPEKTION DER SS-TOTENKOPFVERBÄNDE UND KONZENTRATIONSLAGER
GENERALINSPEKTEUR DER VERSTARKTEN SS-TOTENKOPF STANDARTEN

On July 4th 1934 SS-Oberführer Theodor Eicke was appointed Inspector of Concentration Camps and Guard Formations, and in 1935 an inspectorate was established with its headquarters at Block F., Friedrichstrasse 129, Berlin NW 7.

On the 2nd August 1936 the inspectorate was moved to Oranienburg, on the outskirts of Berlin, near the new concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, where it remained until the end of the war.

In August 1937 the staff of the inspectorate consisted of 43 persons.

In 1939 the Inspectorate of Death's Head Units and Concentration camps, was reorganised as the General Inspectorate of Reinforced Death's Head Regiments.

In November 1939 Eicke left the inspectorate to take command of the Death's Head Division.

Until SS-Brigadeführer Richard Glücks took over as Inspector Concentration Camps (Reichsführer-SS-Inspekteur der Konzentrationslager), Hauptamtschef August Heissmeyer was in temporary charge. From August 1940 until March 1942 the Inspectorate came under the SS-Führungshauptamt under SS-Obergruppenführer Jüttner.

On the 16th March 1942 the concentration camps were subordinated to SS Economic and Administrative Main Office (SS-Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt-WVHA) as Office Group D (Amtsgruppe D). This office had taken increasing interest in concentration camps as a source of labour for its numerous economic enterprises. The chief of the WVHA until the end was SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl.

Inspectors: SS-Obergruppenführer Theodor Eicke 4.7.34 — .11.39
SS-Brigadeführer Richard Glücks .3.42 — . 5.45

SANITÄTS-ABTEILUNG SS-TOTENKOPFVERBÄNDE
SANITÄTS-ABTEILUNG SS-TOTENKOPFSTANDARTEN

The Medical Battalion of the SS-TV was attached to the Inspectorate of SS Death's Head Units and Concentration Camps, and was responsible for the health of SS-TV personnel. In December 1938 its total strength was 13 officers and 205 other ranks.

Commanders: SS-Staf. Dr. Kenzken.

TRUPPENVERWALTUNGSAMT

This office was responsible for all administrative matters concerning the SS-TV. In December 1938 it employed 35 persons.

STABSNACHRICHTENZUG SS-TV

This Motorised Signals Platoon was at the disposal of the Inspectorate of SS Death's Head Units and Concentration Camps. In December 1938 its total strength was 2 officers and 35 other ranks.

SS-STURMBANN "DACHAU"/WACHTRUPPE "OBERBAYERN" DER ALLGEMEINEN-SS
SS-WACHSTURMBANN I "OBERBAYERN"
SS-TOTENKOPFSTANDARTE 1 "OBERBAYERN"
SS-TOTENKOPF-REKRUTEN-STANDARTE "OBERBAYERN"

"Papa Eicke" and his men relax off duty, 1934. (Page Taylor Collection.)

In June 1935, SS-Oberführer Theodor Eicke took over command of Dachau concentration camp, and with it a thoroughly corrupt and demoralised guard detachment of barely 120 men. Eicke immediately dismissed 60 men and set about improving the discipline and morale of the remainder, at the same time recruiting carefully-chosen personnel. In 1934/5 this unit was enlarged and renamed SS-Wachsturmbann I "Oberbayern".

In 1937 it was again enlarged*, and renamed SS-Totenkopfstandarte 1 "Oberbayern", and organised as follows:

Stab	H.Q.
I Stuba. (1.— 4. Hdschft.)	1st Bn. (1st-4th Coys.)
II Stuba. (5.— 8. Hdschft.)	2nd Bn. (5th-8th Coys.)
III Stuba. (9.—12. Hdschft.)	3rd Bn. (9th-12th Coys.)
IV Stuba. (13.—16. Hdschft.)	4th Bn. (13th-16th Coys.)
V Stuba. (17.—20. Hdschft.)	5th Bn. (17th-20th Coys.)
Nachr. Hdschft.	Signals Coy.
Musikzug	Band

In September 1938 the 1st and 2nd battalions took part in the Sudeten operation at Asch.

In November 1939 the unit was renamed the SS Death's Head Recruiting Regiment, and in the winter of 1940/1 was disbanded.

Commanders: SS-Oberf. Theodor Eicke., SS-Staf. Otto Augustini., SS-Ostubaf. Max Simon.

* Some of the additional personnel came from two SS-Sonderkommandos under the command of SS District South West, at the Political Schools (Ordensburgen) Crösinsee and Vogelsang. (See RFSS 155/2684885.)

SS-WACHTRUPPE "BRANDENBURG"
SS-WACHSTURMBANN V "BRANDENBURG"
SS-TOTENKOPFSTANDARTE 2 "BRANDENBURG"

On the 28th April 1935 SS-Wachtruppe "Brandenburg" was formed as a guard unit for Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp,[1] and was organised as follows:

1. Hundertschaft	Oranienburg-Schloss
2. Hundertschaft	Oranienburg-Schloss
3. Hundertschaft	Columbia-Haus

In 1935 the unit was re-organised and renamed SS-Totenkopfsturmbann V "Brandenburg".

On the 1st July 1937 it was enlarged and formed into a regiment: SS-Totenkopfstandarte 2 "Brandenburg". By December 1937 the regiment had six battalions,[2] but by the spring of 1939 it was again down to four.[3]

Stab	H.Q.
I Stuba. (1.— 4. Hdschft.)	1st Bn. (1st-4th Coys.)
II Stuba. (5.— 8. Hdschft.)	2nd Bn. (5th-8th Coys.)
III Stuba. (9.—12. Hdschft.)	3rd Bn. (9th-12th Coys.)
IV Stuba. (13.—16. Hdschft.)	4th Bn. (13th-16th Coys.)
Nachrichten-Hundertschaft	Signals Coy.
Musikzug	Band

In 1939 was added:

Kraftfahrstaffel	Motor Transport Echelon

In September 1938 the 1st and 2nd battalions took part in the Sudeten operation at Brieg.

On the 12th September 1939 the 2nd (reinforced) Death's Head Regiment "Brandenburg" under SS-Gruf. Theodor Eicke was sent to Poland where it worked in conjunction with EG III in the 8th Army region. On the 26th September the regiment returned to Germany.[4]

At the end of the year the regiment was renamed the 5th Death's Head Regiment.[5]

Commanders: SS-Ostubaf. Michael Lippert
SS-Staf. Otto Reich
SS-Staf. Paul Nostitz

1. Das Schwarze Korps., No. 19, 10.7.35, p. 4
2. Dienstalterliste der SS. Stand vom 1.12.37.
3. Die Waffen-SS., p. 346.
4. Einsatzgruppen in Polen (Heft 2), pp. 38-43.
5. Die Waffen-SS., p. 346.

Machine gun crew of the 1st Death's Head Regiment in action during the Sudeten Crisis, September 1938.

SS-SONDERKOMMANDO 3
SS-WACHKOMMANDO "SACHSENBURG"
SS-WACHSTURMBANN II "ELBE"
SS-WACHSTURMBANN III "SACHSEN"
SS-TOTENKOPFSTANDARTE 3 "THÜRINGEN"

In the spring of 1933, SS District Centre formed a special commando from General SS volunteers in Dresden. On the 1st May 1934 a second company was formed, and in the autumn a third was formed from cadres drawn from the first two companies. In the summer of 1935 Political Readiness Squads (Politische Bereitschaften) were disbanded, and most of the personnel provided the nucleus of the SS-Verfügungstruppe. The 1st and 3rd companies of Special Commando 3 went to form Wachtruppe "Sachsen", and the 2nd and 4th, Wachtruppe "Elbe". Wachtruppe "Sachsen" was brought to Chemnitz and then transferred to Weimar-Buchenwald. "Elbe" was transferred from Bad Sulza to Weimar Buchenwald, where both came together to form a cadre for the 3rd SS Death's Head Regiment "Thüringen", which by December 1937 had grown to seven battalions.[3]

In September 1938 the 1st and 2nd battalions took part in the Sudeten operation at Radebeul and Kötzschenbroda.

In November 1939, just prior to the formation of the SS Death's Head Division the regiment was organised as follows:

Stab	H.Q.
I Stuba. (1.— 4. Hdschft.)	1st Bn. (1st-4th Coys.)
II Stuba. (5.— 8. Hdschft.)	2nd Bn. (5th-8th Coys.)
III Stuba. (9.—12. Hdschft.)	3rd Bn. (9th-12th Coys.)
IV Stuba. (13.—16. Hdschft.)	4th Bn. (13th-16th Coys.)
Nachrichten-Hundertschaft	Signals company
Kraftfahrstaffel*	Motor Transport Echelon
Musikzug	Band

Shortly after the regiment was renamed the 10th SS Death's Head Regiment.[4]

Commanders: SS-Sthptf.** Karl Koch
SS-Sthptf. Herman Pistor
SS-Staf. Paul Nostitz
SS-Stubaf. Heimo Hierthes

1. Das Schwarze Korps., No. 15, 12.6.35, p. 1.
2. Die Waffen-SS., p. 346.
3. Dienstalterliste der SS vom 1.12.37.
4. Die Waffen-SS., p. 347.

Youthful guard of honour drawn from the 2nd Death's Head Regiment "Brandenburg", 1938 (?).

* Possibly part of the H.Q. company.

** The rank Sturmhauptführer was introduced in September 1931, and replaced in May 1933 by SS-Hauptsturmführer, although it was still used in the October 1934 "Dienstalterliste der SS der NSDAP".

Officers of SS-Sonderkommando Sachsen (PB SS.3) in winter service dress, 1934 (?). (Bozich Collection.)

SS-TOTENKOPFSTANDARTE 4 "OSTMARK"

Formed on the 1st April 1938 by order of the Reichsführer-SS, near Linz* for the newly-built concentration camp at Mauthausen.

Stab	H.Q.
I Stuba. (1.—4. Hdschft.)	1st Bn. (1st-4th Coys.)
II Stuba. (5.—8. Hdschft.)	2nd Bn. (5th-8th Coys.)
Nachrichten-Hundertschaft	Signals company

In October 1938 a third battalion was formed in Berlin-Adlershof. At first it was known as SS Death's Head Battalion Götze, after its commander SS-Ostubaf. Götze. In July 1939 it was renamed the SS Danzig Home Defence (SS-Heimwehr Danzig).

As the original third battalion had become an independent unit, a new third battalion staff was formed in the summer of 1940. In May 1940 the reinforced 4th SS Death's Head Regiment was stationed in Prague, and in 1941 became part of the 2nd SS Infantry Brigade.

Commanders: SS-Staf. Otto Reich.

* Steyr according to the 1938 SS Statistical Yearbook.

Duty N.C.O. with gorget, and members of SS-Sonderkommando Sachsen (PB SS.3) in service dress, 1934 (?). The building shown above and opposite has not been identified. It could be either the entrance to Ettersberg Concentration camp, or the unit's barracks.

SS-STURMBANN GÖTZE
SS-HEIMWEHR DANZIG

Beginning in October 1938, the third battalion of the 4th SS Death's Head Regiment was formed in Berlin-Adlershof under SS-Ostubaf. Götze. In the summer of 1939 the Danzig Senate had decided to form a Home Defence, and the responsibility for this was taken over by the Reichsführer-SS.

In June 1939 the battalion was transported to Danzig where it was joined by the Anti Tank Demonstration Company of the Death's Head Regiments (Panzerabwehr-Lehrsturm der SS-Totenkopfstandarten), which as part of the Home Defence, became known as Leiner Company (Companie "Leiner"). In July 1939 the formation of the unit was completed and its full complement consisted of 42 officers and approximately 1,500 men, two-thirds of whom were German nationals while the rest came from Danzig.

The unit was organised as follows:[1]

Stab	H.Q.
1. Schützen-Sturm	1st Rifle coy.
2. Schützen-Sturm	2nd Rifle coy.
3. Schützen-Sturm	3rd Rifle coy.
4. Schützen-Sturm	4th Rifle coy.
M.G.-Sturm	Machine-gun coy.
Infanteriegeschütz-Sturm	Infantry gun coy.
1. Panzerabwehr-Sturm	1st Anti-tank coy.
2. Panzerabwehr-Sturm	2nd Anti-tank coy.
Nachrichten-Zug	Signals platoon
Pionier-Zug	Engineer platoon

Throughout November 1939 the unit saw action in and around Danzig, Gdingen and Westerplatte. Shortly after the unit was disbanded and its personnel distributed as cadres for the new Death's Head units.[2]

Commander: SS-Ostubaf. Götze

1. Die Waffen-SS., p. 347.
2. Ibid., pp. 419-20.

The Danzig Home Defence, August 1939. (Heinrich Hoffmann.)

SS-Obersturmbannführer Götze, commander of the Danzig Home Defence. Götze was killed during the French campaign in 1940. (National Archives.)

SS-WACHSTURMBANN EIMANN

This unit was formed on the 3rd July 1939, following the closure of the Danzig Senate, as a Police Reinforcement Battalion (Polizeiverstärkungs-sturmbann) on the orders of SS-Brigaf. Schäfer and with the assistance of SS District North East.

The battalion consisted of 4 companies (Hundertschaften) and a motor transport Echelon (Kraftfahrstaffel).

From July until September 1939 the battalion saw action in and around Danzig. During Hitler's visit the battalion carried out security duties in Oliva and Danzig, while two companies guarded Hitler's H.Q. in Zoppot.

Following the fighting in Danzig large numbers of civilians were taken prisoner and put in camps at Neufahrwasser, Stutthof and Grenzdorf, where two companies of the battalion acted as guards.

At the beginning of 1940 Himmler ordered the battalion to be disbanded, and its personnel were transferred to Death's Head units.[1]

UNIFORM

Members of the battalion wore either black SS, or grey-green Danzig police uniforms, although during his post-war interrogation Eimann could not remember if the battalion had in fact been issued with police uniforms.[2]

1. Einsatzgruppen in Polen., Heft 2, p. 192-5. Bericht über Aufstellung, Einsatz und Tätigkeit des SS-Wachsturmbann E.
2. Einsatzgruppen in Polen., pp. 83-84.

SS-TOTENKOPFSTANDARTE 5 "DIETRICH ECKHARDT"

The last peacetime Death's Head Regiment, was formed in the spring of 1939, and was organised as follows:

Stab	H.Q.
I Stuba. (1.— 4. Schützen-Sturm)	1st Bn. (1st-4th Rifle coys.)
II Stuba. (5.— 8. Schützen-Sturm)	2nd Bn. (5th-8th Rifle coys.)
III Stuba. (9.—12. Schützen-Sturm)	3rd Bn. (9th-12th Rifle coys.)

Shortly after the formation of the Death's Head Division the regiment was renumbered the 13th.

WILDDIEB-KOMMANDO ORANIENBURG
SS-SONDERKOMMANDO DIRLEWANGER

Formed on the 15th June 1940, on SS-Ogruf. Gottlob Berger's suggestion, from convicted poachers serving in concentration camps, and known as Poacher Commando Oranienburg. Its commander, Oskar Dirlewanger, was a recently released concentration camp inmate, newly commissioned in the SS with the rank of SS-Ostuf. Training was carried out by the 5th SS Death's Head Regiment, and in September 1940 three hundred men were transported to the General Government, where they were employed both fighting partisans and guarding labourers.

On the 29th January 1942 Himmler issued a directive which established the status of the SS Special Commando Dirlewanger, as that of a volunteer formation of the Waffen-SS.

Commander: SS-Ostuf. (later SS-Oberf.) Oskar Dirlewanger

SS-TOTENKOPF-ERGÄNZUNGS-STURMBANN III*
SS-PIONIEREIHEIT z.b.V. (t-mot.)

Thought to have been formed in Breslau in 1938, and disbanded after service in the Polish campaign, as a semi-motorised engineer unit under army command. Its personnel were distributed to the Waffen-SS or Death's Head Guard Formations.[1]

UNTERFÜHRERSCHULE

With the re-organisation in April 1936 of the SS Death's Head units, an N.C.O.'s school was formed. Its permanent staff in May 1937 was 79 persons.[2] It is thought that the school was disbanded in July 1937.

* A I and II Supplementary battalion is thought to have existed.

1. Der Freiwillige. No. 1. January 1970, pp. 16-17.
2. Statistiches Jahrbuch der SS der NSDAP, 1937, p. 51.

SS-Brigadeführer Schafer with members of the Danzig Protection Police (Schutzpolizei) who were attached to Eimann's Guard Battalion, autumn 1939. (National Archives.)

SS-AUSBILDUNGSLAGER TRAWNIKI

In 1943 SSPF Lublin SS-Gruf. Odilo Globocnik obtained Himmler's consent to form a Russian* concentration camp guard unit, and established a training camp which was attached to the Forced Labour Camp at Trawniki** near Lublin in the General Government.

Hoess in his memoirs recalls that "As might have been expected, these guards, who were called police were unreliable. A company of them was given to me to Auschwitz. After a short time 15 fled, taking with them all the weapons and ammunition they could lay their hands on, and during the chase that followed they engaged their pursuers with fire, which resulted in the deaths of three junior officers. All of them were re-captured, except three who managed to make their escape. The company was immediately disbanded and distributed among all the concentration camps."[3]

During the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto between April and May 1943 a battalion of "Trawniki Männer" consisting of 2 officers and 335 men provided a cordon around part of the Ghetto.[4]

With effect from the 13th August 1943 the training camp and the Forced Labour Camp were taken over by the WVHA, while the training camp came under the official supervision of the commander of Lublin Concentration Camp.[5]

* It appears that most of the personnel were Ukrainian.

** This came under the category of a Forced Labour Camp (Zwangarbeitslager—ZAL), and was known as SS-Arbeitslager Trawniki. Its main industry was the preparation of furs for SS winter clothing.

3. Commandant of Auschwitz, pp. 232-3.
4. NO 1061.
5. NO 1927.

SERVICE DRESS 1933-1940

Members of the SS-Totenkopfverbände wore the same black service uniform as both the Allgemeine-SS and SS-Verfügungstruppe (see Volume 1, pages 8-16, and Volume 3, pages 28-32). As in the SS-VT, drill uniforms were used extensively to protect the black service uniform. In March 1936, it was ordered that an earth-brown (erdbraun) duty uniform should be worn inside the concentration camp. It was not to be worn by sentries at the main gate, who were on view to the public, or as a walking-out dress. The earth-brown uniform consisted of field cap, tunic and breeches, which were identical in cut to their black counterparts. The tunic was worn with collar patches shoulder cords and the NSDAP brassard, which could be removed in the field. The national emblem, and armband were not to be worn on the brown tunic.[1] This uniform was still being worn at the beginning of the war.

In 1937 the SS-TV began to be issued with the field-grey field service uniform, which was already in use in the SS-VT (see Volume 3 page 35).

SERVICE DRESS 1940-1945

By 1940 all concentration camp guards had been equipped with at least one field-grey uniform, which was identical in all respects to that of the Waffen-SS (which will be described in Volume 6). Staff or guard personnel being transferred either to or from Waffen-SS replacement units, were to be equipped with the following basic items of clothing suitable for field-service use:[2]

1 Cloth blouse, field-grey with insignia.
1 Cloth trousers, long, field-grey.
1 Cloth greatcoat, field-grey.
1 Field cap, field-grey.
1 Pr. lace-up ankle boots.
1 Brown shirt or undervest, white.
1 Pr. underpants.
1 Pr. socks.
1 Collar liner (Kragenbinde).
1 Undervest.
1 Balaclava helmet (Kopfschützer).
1 Pr. gloves, wool.
1 Pr. braces.
3 Handkerchiefs.
1 Waist belt.
1 Belt buckle.
1 Bayonet frog.

This was in fact the basic clothing issued to concentration camp personnel until the end of the war.

1. SS Main Office order dated 9.3.36.
2. V.B1.d.W.SS., 1942., item 92.

AUSSTATTUNGSSOLL FÜR BEKLEIDUNG UND AUSRÜSTUNG DER AUSFSEHERINNEN IN DEN KONZENTRATIONSLAGERN

Issue clothing and equipment for female overseers in concentration camps.

I. Clothing.

a. Normal clothing.

Cloth jacket.
Cloth tunic.
Cloth greatcoat with hood.
Waterproof woollen cape.
Drill jacket.
Drill skirt (divided).
Cap (boat shaped).
Blouse, grey.

Stockings, wool.
Stockings, wool.
Tie, black.
Sweater, wool.

b. Winter clothing.

Cap with ear-muffs.
Scarf, wool.
Socks, wool.
Tricot shirt.
Knickers, wool.
Gloves, wool.

II. Footwear.

Guard boots.
Ankle boots.

III. Equipment*.

Bread bag.
Bread bag strap.
Water bottle.
Whistle.
Whistle lanyard.
Dust and sun glasses.

* Only issued to overseers of outside working parties (Aussen-Kommandos).

1. Wirtschafts-u. Verwaltungsanordnungen, August 1944., p. 29.

Left to right

Very early photograph of SS concentration camp guards wearing drill uniform with the early service cap. Probably taken in Dachau in 1933.

Members of SS-Sonderkommando Sachsen (SS PB.3), 1934 (?). (Bozich Collection.)

Death's head personnel in the earth-grey service uniform, 1937. (Bozich Collection.)

Duty N.C.O. (Unterführer vom Dienst) with gorget, and leader of the Political Section, who was a member of the Security Police, 1939 (?). (Bozich Collection.)

SS-Hauptscharführer on the staff of the commandant of Buchenwald Concentration Camp. The letter "L" on his shoulder straps stands for training (Lehr), and since this

(continued opposite)

SS-Hauptsturmführer Campe gives his orders to Block Leaders (Blockführer) Meyer, Saathoff, Hohmann, Krämer, Schröter and Seifert, Sachsenhausen 1940 (?). (Wiener Library.)

(cont. from caption opposite)

photograph was probably taken in 1939/40, it is likely that this man was responsible for training reservists who had been called up to replace the regular guards. The same man also appears in the photographs on page 22 all of which were found in an album by an American soldier at the end of the war. All the photographs are reproduced by the courtesy of Stanley J. Bozich.

STAHLHELME
Steel helmets

The following information complements the section on steel helmets in Vol. 3, pages 39-41, and is also applicable to the SS-TV.

In August 1935 the RFSS ordered that all members of the SS-VT., TV., and officers' schools must have the new pattern escutcheon on their steel helmets. The escutcheons were to be painted in oil paint, so that all units taking part in the Nuremberg Rally will have the new pattern escutcheons on their helmets.[1]

The Chief of the SS Main Office amended the above order on the 14th August, as the new pattern escutcheons, in the form of transfers, had been ordered from the firm of C. A. Pocher G.m.b.H. Nürnberg-A., at the cost of Rm 25.—per 1,000 pairs.[2]

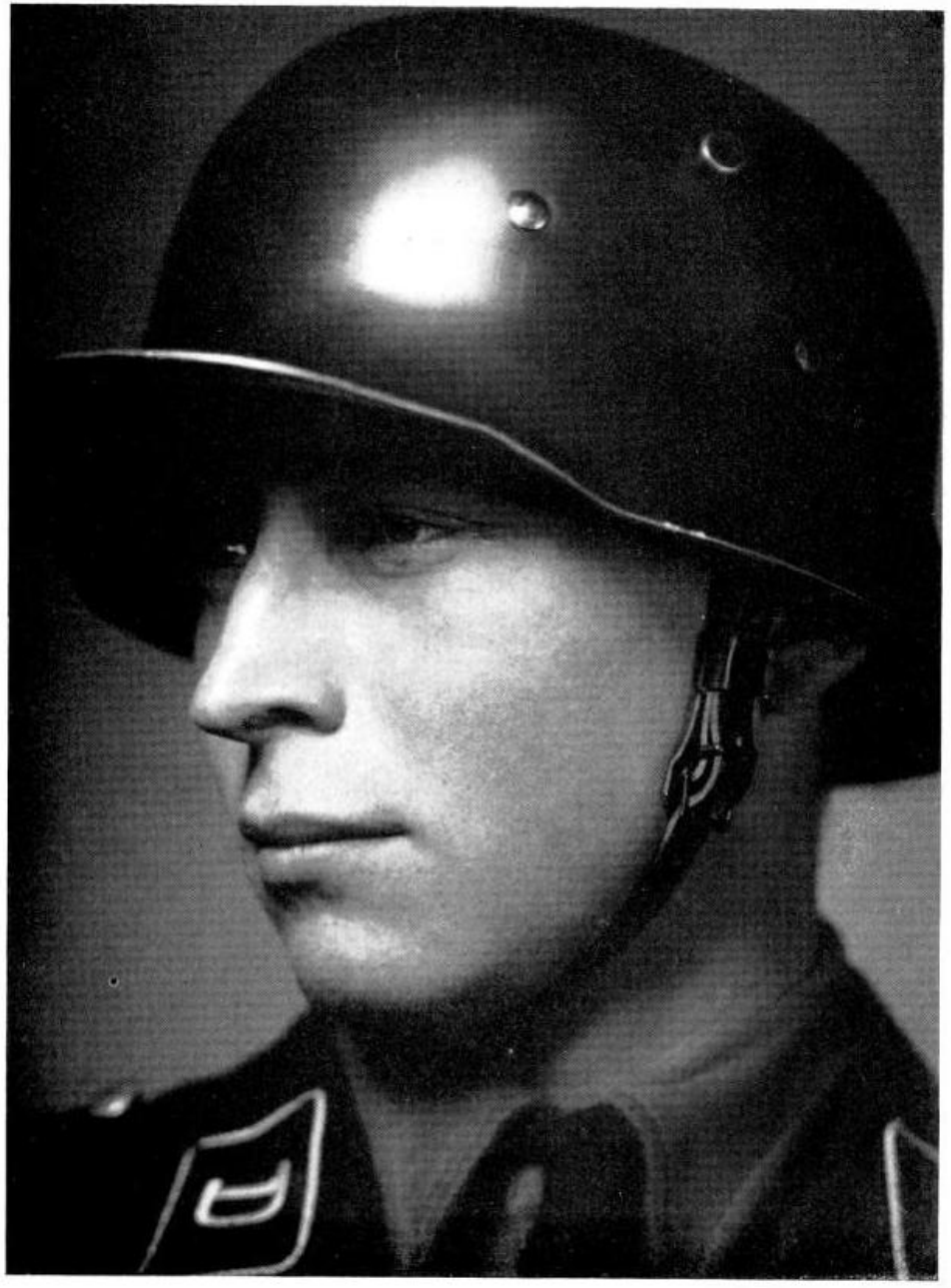
On the 1st November 1935, the Chief of the SS Main Office made it known that since the Ministry of War (Reichskriegsministerium) was due to deliver the new M.35 steel helmet for field service at the end of the year, the proposed grey-green cover for the black steel helmet will not be introduced.

1. Order of the Chief of the SS Main Office to all units of the SS-VT, dated 12th August 1935. See RFSS T-354 414/4133167.
2. RFSS T-354 414/4133164.
3. RFSS T-354 414/2674053.

KRAGENSPIEGEL
Collar patches

In the Allgemeine-SS and the Politische Bereitschaften the battalion was identified by the colour of the stripes, and the company by the arabic numerals on the armband. (See Volume 1, page 34.).
In the SS-TV. officers wore the battalion number in Roman numerals (I-V), while other ranks wore the company (Hundertschaft) number in arabic numerals on the right collar patch underneath the death's head. The first pattern death's head which is thought to have been introduced in 1935, and from which the unit derived its name, was rather crudely embroidered in aluminium wire. The death's head continued to be embroidered in aluminium wire until April 1936 when Himmler ordered that in future aluminium embroidered insignia will not be worn on the field-grey uniform because it reflected too much light.[1]
On the 1st July 1937 the five battalions were re-organised into three (later five) regiments, and the practice of wearing the battalion number on the right collar patch by officers was discontinued.
In 1938 a fourth regiment was formed in Austria, and it is thought that by this time the company number had been changed to the regimental number.[2]
In May 1940 it was ordered that in future collar patches bearing the death's head and numerals and letters would no longer be worn. The position and design of the death's head was also changed from the horizontal to the vertical position, so that the death's head faced to the left (see Plate 11, fig. 1.). At the same time the wearing of the death's head on both collar patches was forbidden.[3]

1. RFSS T-175 155/2685049.
2. See photograph on page 14.
3. Ausführungsbestimmungen RFSS. Hauptamt H.u.B. vom 19.6.1940 1/3 1501 Ziff. 7. See also V.B1.d.W.SS., 1941., Ziff. 482.



Member of SS-Sturmbann Dachau wearing the RZM model SS steel helmet. (Süddeutscher Verlag.)

SCHULTERSTÜCKE/SCHULTERKLAPPEN
Shoulder straps

The same shoulder cords were worn by members of the SS-TV. on the black service uniform, as by members of the Allgemeine-SS and SS-TV. (see Volume 1, pp. 21.36).
The first army pattern shoulder straps (Schulterklappen) were made of earth-brown cloth for wear with the brown service uniform, but in April 1936 Eicke ordered that members of the SS-TV. were to have the same shoulder straps as the SS-VT.[1] At first these shoulder straps were made of black cloth with rounded ends and black and aluminium piping, and from July 1937 bore the regimental number in grey silk chain stitch. Gradually these shoulder straps were replaced by the plain pattern with pointed ends.
In March 1936, officers were ordered to wear the same shoulder straps as their counterparts in the SS-VT., but without badges (Namenzug).[2]
In December 1940 SS-TV. officers were reminded that by the 31st December they must equip themselves with shoulder straps with black underlay, and light brown piping and bronzed metal stars.[3]

1. Eicke to commanders of all SS-TV. units dated 6.4.36. See RFSS T-175 155/2685053.
2. Order dated 9.3.36. See RFSS T-175 155/2685059-60 incl.
3. RFSS T-175 173/2707803-4.

SS-DIENSTGRADE/SS-DIENSTSTELLUNGEN
SS Ranks and appointments

The SS-TV. continued to use the General SS rank titles, and unlike the SS-VT. did not use the prefix 'Staffel' to the ranks SS-Bewerber, SS-Anwärter and SS-Mann. Because of their specialised duties, a number of special titles were used in the running of concentration camps, which should not be mistaken for SS ranks. The most commonly used titles were as follows:

Kommandant	Camp commandant who usually held rank of SS-Stubaf. up to and including SS-Staf.
Schutzhaftlagerführer	Officer in charge of the protective custody camp itself. Usually held rank of SS-Ustuf. up to and including SS-Hstuf. The larger camps had two such officers who were on duty alternately for 24 hours.
Rapportführer	N.C.O. usually with the rank of SS-Hscha. was responsible for the roll calls which were held as many as three times a day. He reported to the Schutzhaftlagerführer the total of effectives after each roll call.
Kompanie-bzw. Blockführer	N.C.O. usually with rank of SS-Scha. was responsible for discipline, cleanliness and order in the blocks under his authority. He relied for the execution of his orders on the senior block inmate, and senior barrack inmate, both of whom enjoyed special privileges.
Arbeitsdienstführer	Labour service leader held N.C.O. rank and was responsible for the allocation and selection of work parties.
Kommando-Führer	N.C.O. in charge of outside work party.

Female overseers had special rank titles which are believed to have been the same as those prescribed for female helpers. See Vol. 5, p. 40.

SS-WACHVERBÄNDE 1933–1936*

1. Collar patch for non-commissioned ranks in the SS Battalion Dachau (SS-Sturmbann Dachau).

2. Collar patch for officers of the battalions and companies (Hundertschaften) of the SS Guard/Death's Head Units.

3. Collar patch for members of the battalion staff (here, officer on the staff of the V/SS Death's Head Battalion "Brandenburg").

4. Collar patch for other ranks in the companies of the SS Guard/Death's Head Battalions (here, 14th Company).

5. Armband for all ranks in the I SS Guard/Death's Head Battalion and the commandant's staff of Dachau Camp.

6. Armband for all ranks in the II SS Guard/Death's Head Battalion and the commandant's staff of Lichtenberg and Sulza camps.

7. Armband for all ranks in the III SS Guard/Death's Head Battalion and the commandant's staff of Sachsenburg Camp.

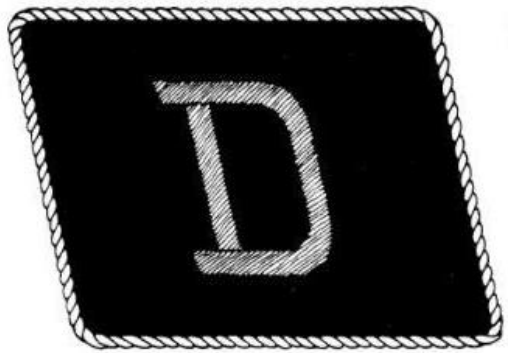
8. Armband for all ranks in the IV SS Guard/Death's Head Battalion and the commandant's staff of Sachsenhausen Camp.

9. Armband for all ranks in the V SS Guard/Death's Battalion.

2–6. T-175 155/268497-84 incl.

* On the 29th March 1936 these units were collectively renamed the SS-Totenkopfverbände, and the Wachsturmbanne (battalions) and Wachstürmen (Companies) were then called Totenkopfsturmbanne and Totenkopfstürmen respectively.

PLATE 1



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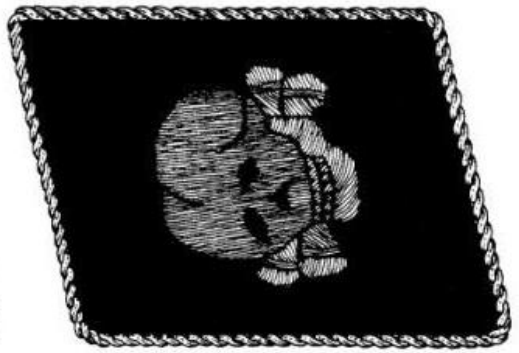

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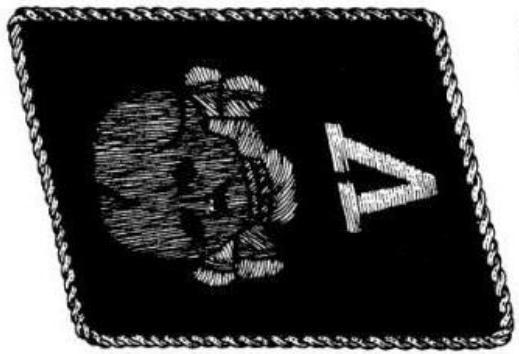

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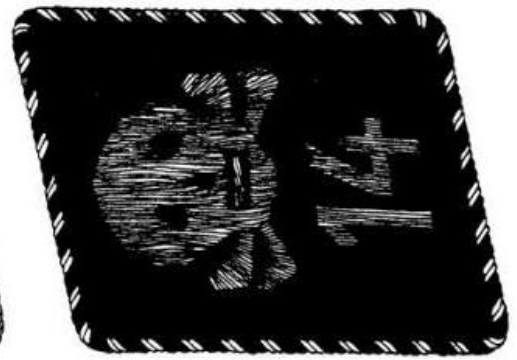

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Oberbayern
5
Elbe
6
Sachsen
7
Ostfriesland
8
Brandenburg
9

PLATE 2 INSPEKTION DER KONZENTRATIONSLAGER UND SS-WACH/TOTENKOPFVERBÄNDE

1. Collar patch for all ranks on the staff of the Leader of SS Death's Head Units (Führer der SS-Totenkopfverbände).
2. Armbadge worn on the lower left sleeve by all officers in the SS-TV with the rank of SS-Staf. and above.
3. 1st pattern armband for all ranks on the staff of the Leader of SS Death's Head Units.
4. 2nd pattern armband for all ranks on the staff of the Inspector of Concentration Camps and SS Death's Head Units. Introduced in July 1937.

1. RFSS T-175 155/2684971-84 incl.
3. RFSS T-175 155/2685059.
4. This armband was originally intended for all members of the SS-TV in January 1936. See RFSS T-175 155/2685065-66. The first prototypes were produced by the SS Admin. office, but were rejected in July 1937 because they had been produced in Sütterlin script reserved exclusively for the LAH. The next pattern was produced in gothic script and was accepted. See RFSS T-175 155/2684880.

PLATE 3 LAGERKOMMANDANTUR DER KONZENTRATIONSLAGER UND STANDORT-KOMMANDANTUR SS-OBERABSCHNITT SÜDWEST

1. Collar patch for commandants of concentration camps up to and including the rank of SS-Ostubaf.
2. Collar patch for N.C.O.'s and men on the staff of the camp commandant, and the garrison commandant's office of SS District South West, including the special commando (Sonderkommando SS-OA. Südwest), until July 1937.*
3. 2nd pattern collar patch for officers and N.C.O.'s on the staff of a camp commandant.**
4. Armbadge worn on the lower right sleeve by N.C.O.'s and men on the staff of the camp commandant.

PLATE 4 SS-ÜBUNGSLAGER UND WIRTSCHAFTSBETRIEBE DACHAU

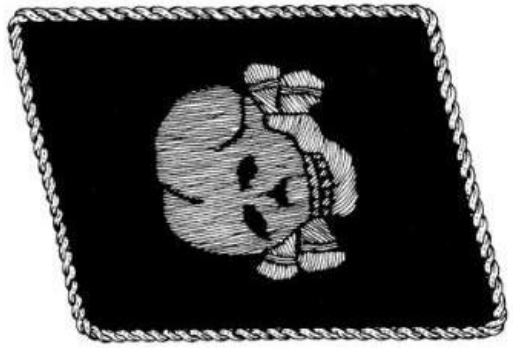
1. Collar patch for non-commissioned members of the staff of SS Training Camp Dachau.
2. Collar patch for members of the staff of the SS Clothing Depot Dachau (SS-Bekleidungslager Dachau), and SS Economic Enterprises (SS-Wirtschaftsbetriebe).
3. Armband introduced in September 1935 for members of the staff of SS Training Camp Dachau.
4. Armband worn until June 1937 by members of the staff of SS Economic Enterprises Dachau.
5. Armband for permanent personnel of SS Training Camp Dachau.

1. SS-Preisliste Nr 1., Dezember 1934, p. 12.
2. RFSS T-175 155/2684893.
3. Verfügung des Chefs des Verwaltungsamtes SS IV/V Ch.Az.53/35 von 27.9.35.
4. In June 1937 the question arose as to whether or not personnel of the SS Economic Enterprises were subordinate to the commandant (Platzkommandant) of the SS Training Camp Dachau. It was decided that they were, and so they automatically became part of the commandant's staff, and their insignia nos. 2 and 4 was replaced by nos. 1 and 5.
5. Introduced by order of the RFSS, dated 18.6.37. See RFSS T-175 155/2684878.

* This collar patch was also worn by members of the Sonderkommando des Würtemburgischen Politischen Landespolizeiamts. See Chief of the SS-HA to SS-OA. Südwest., 18th August 1936. RFSS T-175 158/26 8860.

** The December 1934 issue of the SS-Befehls-Blatt announced that members of the staff of the camp commandant should wear an armband "Kdtr" followed by the name of the camp, but again this armband is not included in the SS price list dated 19th January 1935. 1-4. See appendix 4.

PLATE 2



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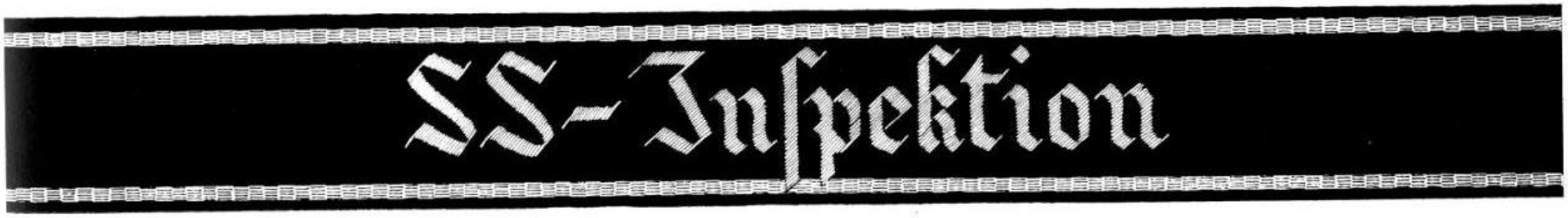

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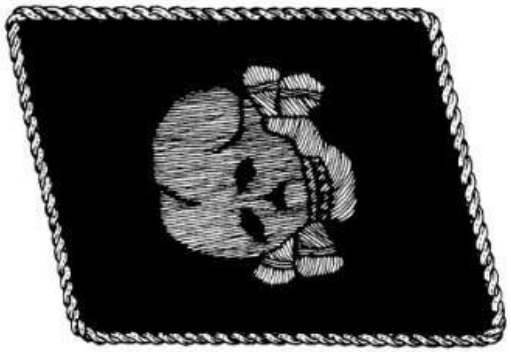
PLATE 3



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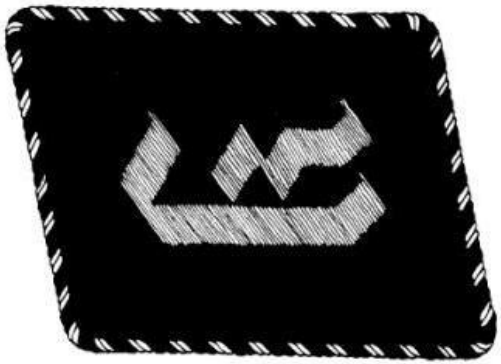

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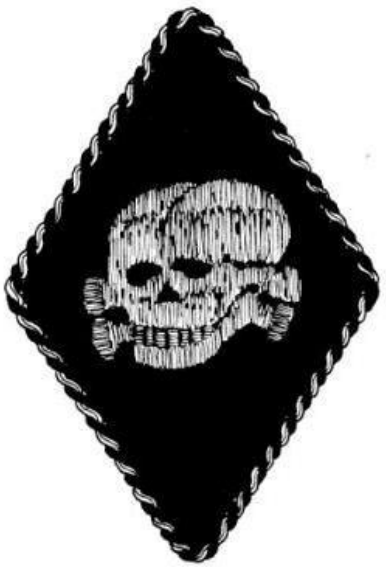

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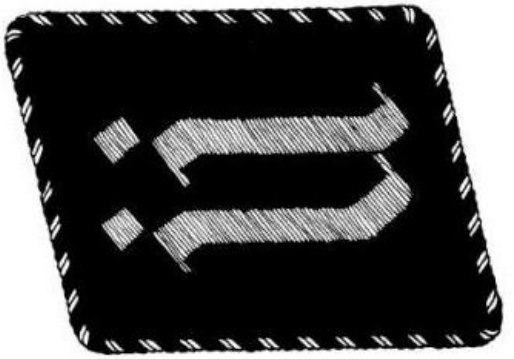
PLATE 4



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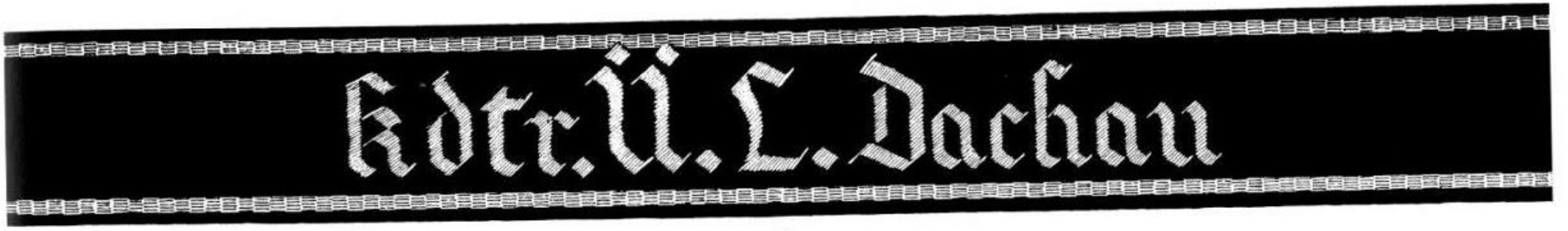

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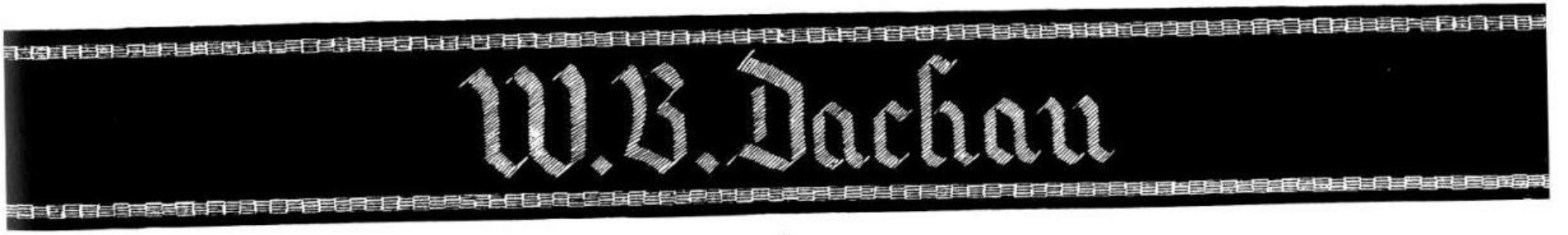

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PLATE 5 SS-TOTENKOPF-STANDARTE 1 "OBERBAYERN"

1. Collar patch for N.C.O.'s and men in the centuries. Here 12th.
2. Collar patch for all ranks in the regiment, which was introduced in 1937/8.
3. 3rd pattern shoulder strap for other ranks.
4. 1st pattern armband for all ranks.
5. 2nd pattern armband for all ranks.

1. RFSS T-175 155/2684971 and 2684650.
2. See photograph on page 14.
3. The 1st pattern introduced in March 1936 had no numeral. In October 1938 when it was decided to change the armband, there was some discussion as to what should be worn on the shoulder strap in place of the letter O. A death's head was suggested, but the final choice was number 1. See RFSS T-175 155/2684668.
4. In September 1938 this pattern was replaced by a pattern with the death's head on it, but since there were 3,000 of the old pattern still in stock, it was decided that the old should be worn on field-grey while stocks last, and that the new pattern should be worn on the black uniform. See RFSS T-175 155/2684651.
5. SS-Befehlsblatt., Nr 3, 25.3.38, Ziff 19. Also RFSS T-175 155/2684669.

PLATE 6 SS-TOTENKOPF-STANDARTE 2 "BRANDENBURG"

1. Collar patch for officers up to and including the rank of SS-Ostubaf.
2. Collar patch for N.C.O.'s and men. Here 24th Century.
3. 3rd pattern shoulder strap for other ranks.
4. Armband for all ranks.

1-3. RFSS T-175 155/2684971-84 incl.

PLATE 7 SS-TOTENKOPF-STANDARTE 3 "THÜRINGEN"

1. Collar patch for officers up to and including the rank of SS-Ostubaf.
2. Collar patch for N.C.O.'s and men. Here 15th Century.
3. 3rd pattern shoulder strap for other ranks.
4. Armband for all ranks in the regiment, and on the staff of the Commandant of Hottelstedt camp.

1. RFSS T-175 155/2684971-84.
4. RFSS T-175 155/2684890-09.

PLATE 8 SS-TOTENKOPF-STANDARTE 4 "OSTMARK" UND SS-HEIMWEHR DANZIG

1. Collar patch for officers up to and including the rank of SS-Ostubaf.
2. Collar patch for other ranks in both units.
3. 3rd pattern shoulder strap for other ranks in the 4th SS Death's Head Regiment.
4. Armband for all ranks in the 4th SS Death's Head Regiment, introduced in September 1938.
5. Armband for all ranks in the Danzig Home Defence.

4. Mitteilungsblatt der RZM. Nr 19., 10.9.38, p. 185.
5. See photograph on page 18.

PLATE 9 SANITÄTS-ABTEILUNG SS-TOTENKOPFVERBÄNDE

1. Collar patch for officers up to and including the rank of SS-Ostubaf.
2. Armbadge for officers in the medical battalion who were qualified doctors.
3. Armbadge for qualified medical orderlies.
4. Armband for all ranks.

1. RFSS T-175 155/2684890-98.
2-3. RFSS T-175 155/2684880.
4. SS-Preisliste., April 1939, p. 7.

PLATE 5

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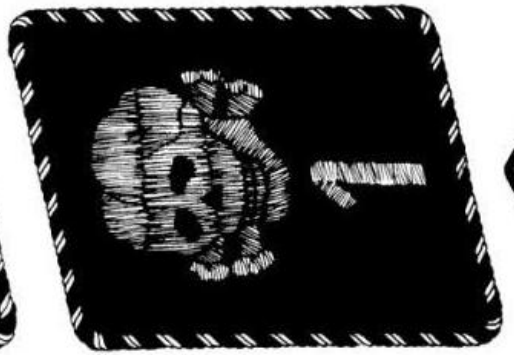

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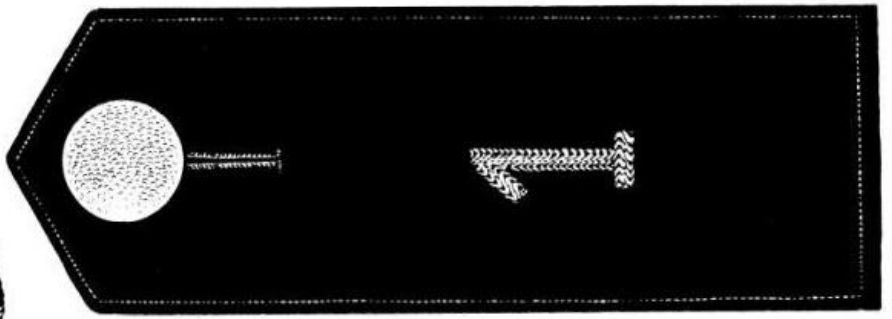

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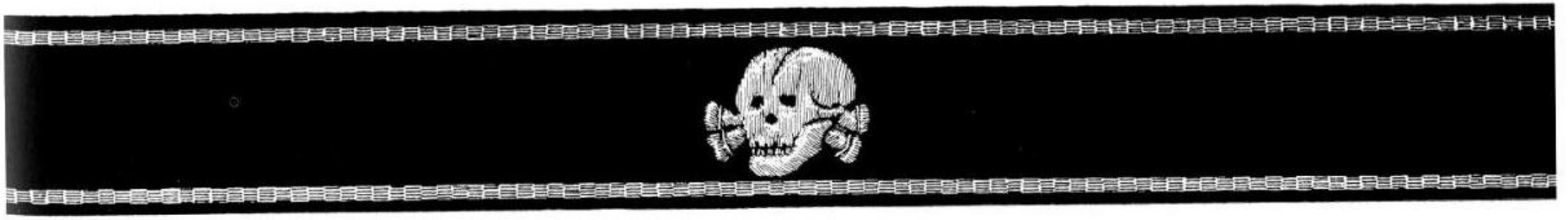

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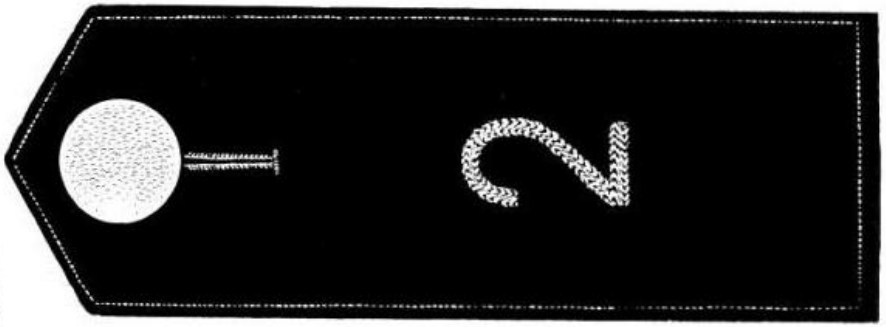

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PLATE 7

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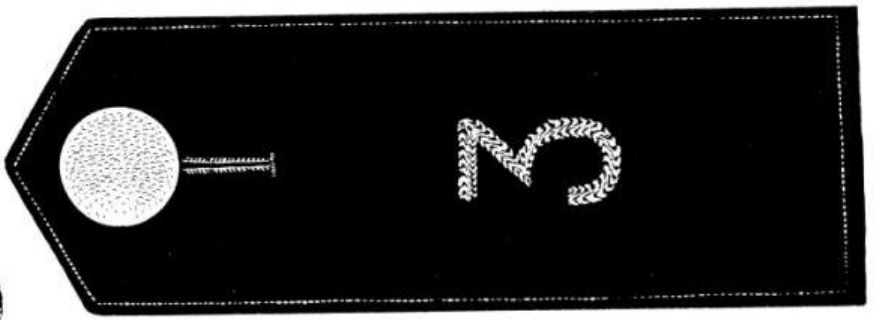

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PLATE 8

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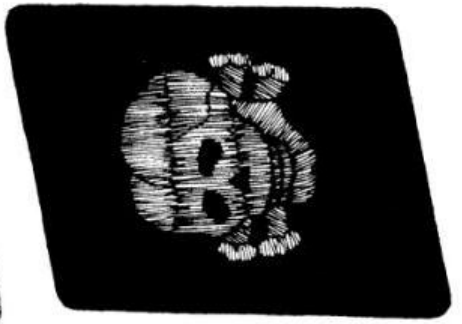

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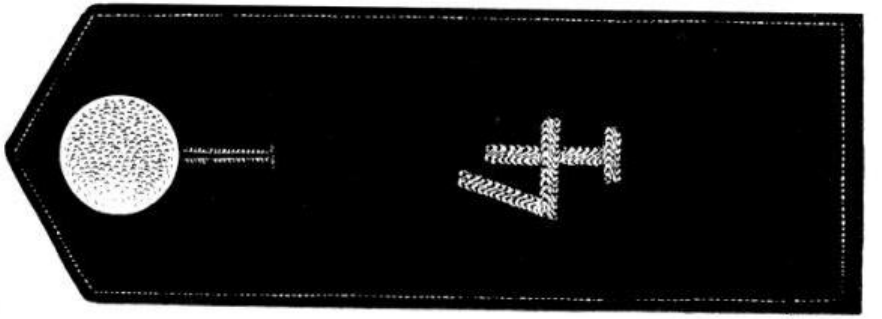

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PLATE 9

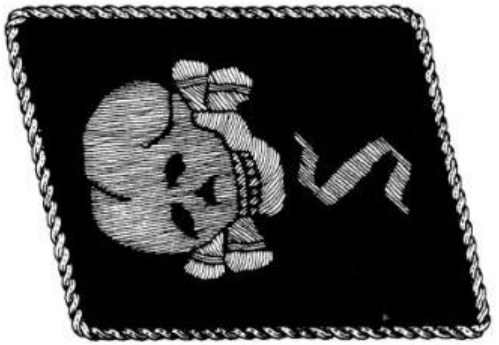

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PLATE 10 SS-RAUTEN

1. Armbadge worn on the lower right sleeve by non-commissioned members of concentration camp commandant's staff.
2. Armbadge worn on the lower left sleeve by all officers in the SS-TV with the rank of SS-Staf. and above.
3. Introduced by SS order dated 13th December 1939, for all members of the NSKK who had reported voluntarily for duty with the SS Death's Head Units.
4. Introduced by permission of the Führer on the 16th November 1939, for all members of the SA who had reported voluntarily for duty with the SS Death's Head Units.

1. RFSS T-175 155/2685059-60.
3. SS-Befehl Nr. 35/245/39 dated 13.12.39.
4. RFSS T-175 173/2708113.

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PLATE 11 INSPEKTION K.L. UND SS-TOTENKOPFWACH-STURMBANNE 1940-1945

1. Collar patch for commissioned members of the staff of the Concentration Camp Inspectorate.
2. Collar patch for other ranks in the SS Death's Head Guard Battalions. Introduced in May 1940.
3. Shoulder strap for officer with the rank of SS-Ustuf. in the concentration camp service. Double underlay, brown over black.
4. Armband which may have been worn by members of the permanent staff of Dachau concentration camp.

1-2. V.Bl.d. W-SS., March 1941, Ziff 158.
4. Original example in the Royal Military Museum, Brussels.

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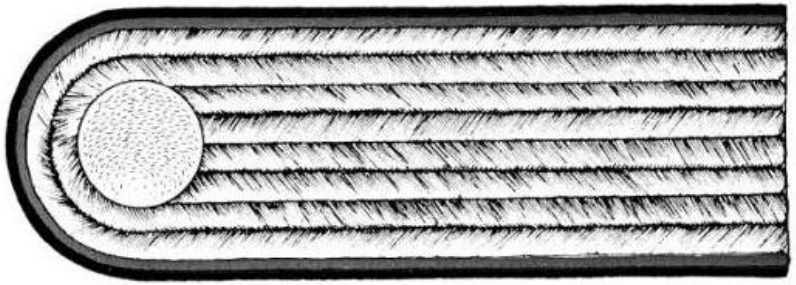

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SCHÜTZENABZEICHEN
Marksmanship badges

The information on this page is primarily a supplement to Volume 3, but is also applicable to the SS-TV.

On the 13th October 1936 the Staff Leader (Stabsführer) of SS District Elbe, wrote to the Chief of the SS Main Office asking if SS members returning from service in the armed forces were allowed to wear their marksman's lanyard (Schützenschnur) on SS uniform.[1] In reply the SS Main Office wrote that the wearing of the lanyard was not allowed, but that the shooting badges of the Reichswehr (a series of aluminium braid stripes and chevrons) awarded to members of the SS before the 1st June 1935, may be worn on the left cuff of the SS service dress tunic.[2]

A draft institution order dated November 1937, laid down the rules for the award of an SS Shooting Badge (SS-Schiessabzeichen), which had been approved by the Führer on the 24th February 1937. It was to be awarded in four classes and worn on the lower right sleeve. Members of the SS-VT. were eligible, and the standards for each award corresponded to army regulations (H-Dv. 240).[3] It appears that this badge was never awarded to members of the SS, and in January 1938 it was decided to award the badge to members of the German Reichs Veterans League (Deutscher Reichskriegerbund), as the SS Shooting Badge.[4]

A draft institution order of the Reichsführer-SS dated November 1937 described an SS-VT. Shooting Badge (Schützenabzeichen der SS-V.T.). It was to be awarded to other ranks for proficiency with rifle, heavy and light machine-guns. The oval silver pin-on badge, for wear on the right breast pocket, was to be awarded in three classes:

II Shooting Class	Without lower oakleaf
I Shooting Class	With two lower oakleaves
Sharpshooting Class	With three lower oakleaves

The class of the sharpshooting badge (1-10) was to be engraved on the top of the oakleaf wreath. A battalion could order badges from the workshop of Gahr in Munich, Marieannenstrasse 3, for the inclusive cost per 1000, of 0.74 Rm.[5] It appears that the badge was never in fact introduced.

SS-ÄRMELABZEICHEN
Armbadges

In addition to those illustrated in Volume 3, pp. 67-8, an Armourer Candidate (SS-Waffenwärter) on completion of his course at the Army Armourers School (Heereswaffenmeisterschule) Berlin-Lichtenburg, was entitled to wear the army armourer sergeant's armbadge on the lower right sleeve.[6]

For motorised units of the SS-VT, special badges of rank were introduced for wear on overalls and greatcoats on the 25th April 1936.[7] The badges consisted of a system of stripes which were worn on the upper right arm, 15 cms below the shoulder. The stripes were made of aluminium braid for driving overalls, and white rubber for the rubberised greatcoat, and were 8 cms long by 1 cm wide. The distance between each stripe was 0.3 cm. In September 1937 the order was amended, so that the stripes went right round the arm.[8]

Field officers (SS-Hstuf. and above)	3 stripes
Company officers (SS-Ustuf. and SS-Ostuf.)	2 stripes
(SS-Unterführer)	1 stripe

1. RFSS T-175 155/2685008.
2. RFSS T-175 155/2685010. See also photograph on page 1 of "Das Schwarze Korps" of the 12th June 1935, which shows an officer of SS-Wachkommando Sachsenburg wearing these badges.
3. RFSS T-175 155/2684812-7.
4. RFSS T-175 155/3684789-90.
5. RFSS T-175 155/2684810-1.
6. RFSS T-175 155/2684902.
7. SS-Befehls-Blatt., Nr. 4, 25.4.36, Ziff. 2.
8. SS-Befehls-blatt., Nr. 9, 25.8.37, Ziff. 2.

TRODDELN
Bayonet knots

Although bayonet knots were issued, they did not at first identify the company or battalion of the wearer, but were of a standard pattern (Einheitstroddel). When the various battalions were re-organised into regiments the system of colours to denote the company and battalion was introduced.

1. Junior non-commissioned officers' (Unterführer ohne Portepee) bayonet knot (troddel).
2. Other ranks' bayonet knot.

1. RFSS T-155/2685060 SS-Hauptamt document dated 9th March 1936.
2. Ibid.

SS-AUSRÜSTUNG
SS Equipment

The same equipment was issued to both the SS-VT. and SS-TV. (see Volume 3, pages 76-81).

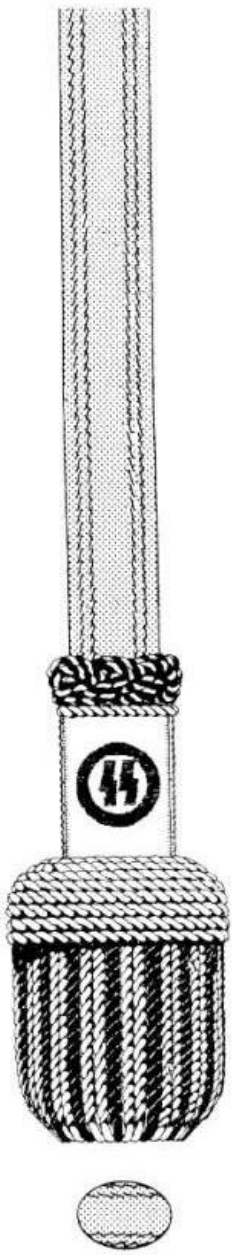
During the war concentration camp guards were issued with the following basic items of equipment:[1]

1 Waist belt
1 Belt buckle
1 Bayonet frog

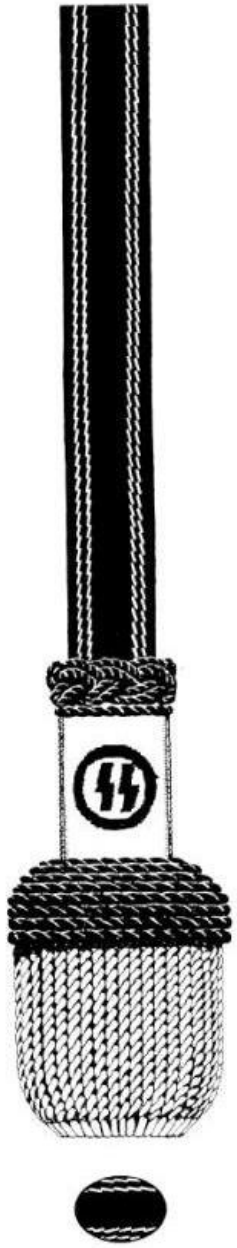
To this was added:

1 Bread bag
1 Pair ammunition pouches
1 Pistol holster

1. V.Bl.d.W.SS., 1942, item 92.



Sword knot (Säbeltroddel) for N.C.O.'s with rank of SS-Unterscharführer and SS-Scharführer (Unterführer ohne Portepee).



Sword knot for SS-Mann up to SS-Rottenführer (SS-Mannschaften).

SS-SPIELMANNSZÜGE UND SS-MUSIKZÜGE
SS Corps of drums and bands

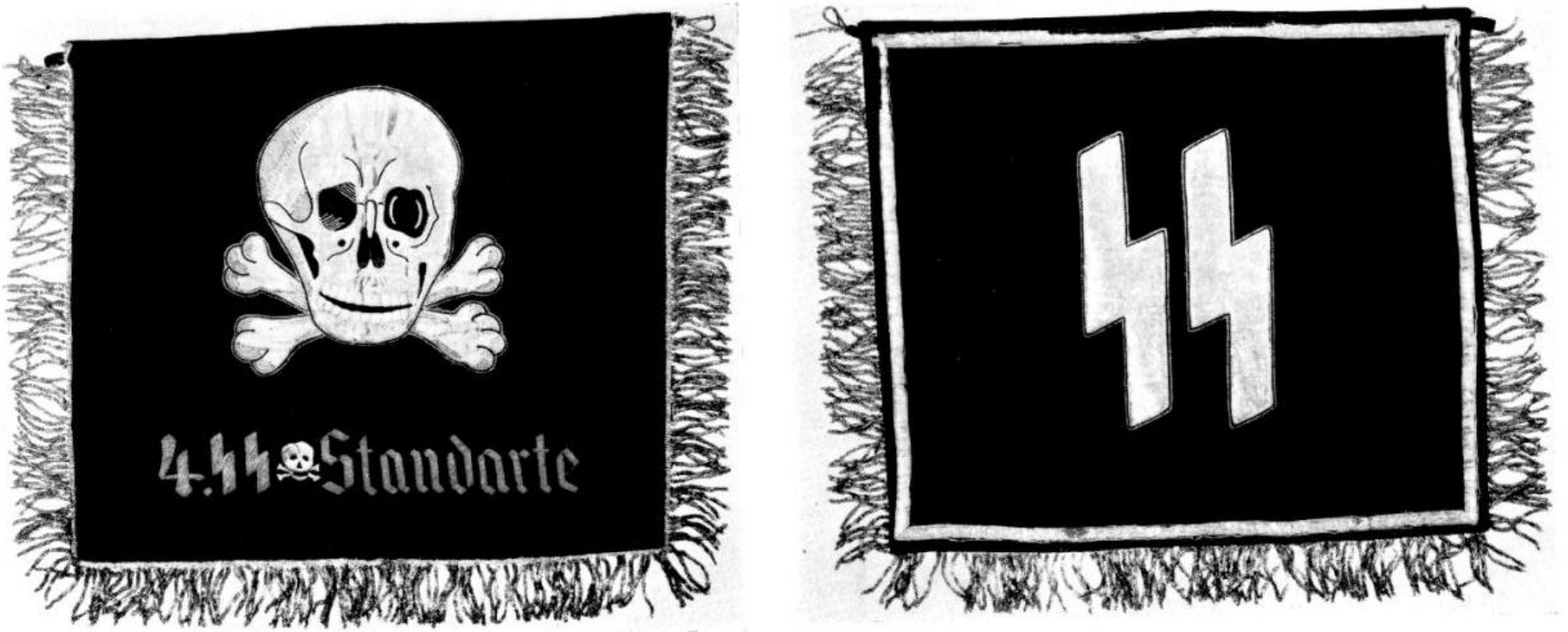
Prior to the reorganisation of the five battalions into three regiments which took place in July 1937, each Death's Head battalion, with possible exception of the IV, had a battalion strength band (SS-Musikzug SS-Sturmbann), and a corps of drums.
After the re-organisation regiments "Oberbayern", and "Brandenburg" are known to have had bands, and the existence of a trumpet banner of the 4th regiment "Ostmark", suggests that it too had a band.

SS GROSSE TROMMEL (PAUKE)
SS Bass drum

A letter from the Reichsführer-SS to the chief of the SS Main Office, dated 31st June 1936 described how the bass drums should be painted in time for the 1936 Party Day Rally.
The drums of the Death's Head Battalions were to be painted as follows: "SS (Kleiner Totenkopf) Sturmbann "Oberbayern" usw."[1]

1. RFSS T-175 150/2678588.

"Jingling Johnnie" of the 2nd SS Death's Head Regiment "Brandenburg".



Obverse and reverse of a trumpet banner of the 4th SS Death's Head Regiment "Ostmark". Although the regiment was only formed in 1938 this banner shows considerable signs of wear, which suggests it was used during the war, possibly by SS Rifle Regiment "Langemarck". (Mollo Collection.)

SS-FAHNEN UND SS-STANDARTEN
SS-flags and standards

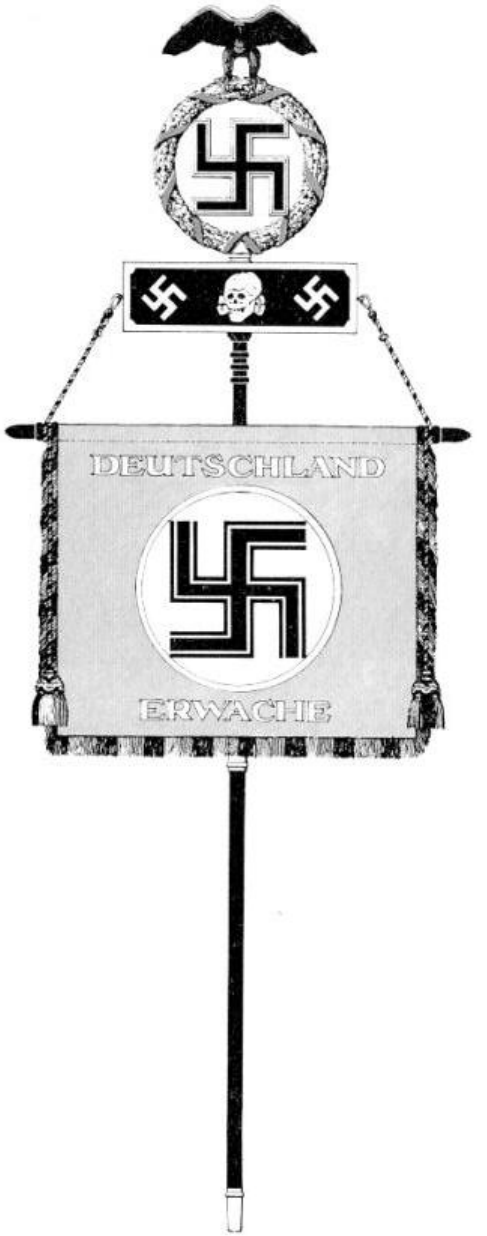
In September 1936 the five Death's Head Battalions were presented with battalion flags at Nuremberg.[1]

In September 1937, following the re-organisation of the five battalions into 4 regiments, it is thought that each regiment was presented with a regimental standard and three battalion flags. Although the 4th regiment had only two battalions, the march plan for the 1938 Party Day Rally shows three.[2]

It was usual Germany army practise to use arabic numerals for regimental, and roman numerals for battalion numbers, e.g. I/4.SS-TV-Standarte "Ostmark" or 1st Bn. 4th SS Death's Head Regiment "Ostmark". It appears however that in the case of Death's Head regimental standards, this rule was not observed, as can be seen from the photograph reproduced opposite, which is thought to show the standard of the 2nd SS Death's Head Regiment "Brandenburg".

If roman numerals were used to designate the regiment on the standard, it seems logical that the same system would have been used on the battalion flag, but a photograph has come to light which shows that on the battalion flag the battalion was identified by Roman, and the regiment by Arabic numerals as illustrated on page 48.

1. Parteitag der Ehre.
2. Reichsparteitag, Teil 1 (SS-Dv. RPT 1), p.86



Regimental standard of the 1st SS Death's Head Regiment "Oberbayern". Gilt eagle and binding of aluminium wreath; scarlet flag with fringe, cords and tassels in red, aluminium and black; all other features in black, white and aluminium.

Believed to be the standard of the 2nd SS Death's Head Regiment Brandenburg.

The colour of the SS-Heimwehr Danzig, presented to the battalion by the Gauleiter of Danzig, Albert Forster, at the Danzig Maifeld on Friday 18 August 1939. Scarlet flag fringed with aluminium; all other features black, white or aluminium.

SS-FAHNENSPIEGEL UND STANDARTENBALKEN
Flag patches and standard crossbars

SS-Totenkopfsturmbann I "Oberbayern"
SS-Totenkopfsturmbann II "Elbe"
SS-Totenkopfsturmbann III "Sachsen"

SS-Totenkopfsturmbann IV "Ostfriesland"
SS-Totenkopfsturmbann V "Brandenburg"

SS-Totenkopfstandarte 1 "Oberbayern"
I II & III Battalions

SS-Totenkopfstandarte 2 "Brandenburg"

I II & III Battalions

SS-Totenkopfstandarte 3 "Thüringen"

I II & III Battalions

SS-Totenkopfstandarte 4 "Ostmark"

I II & III Battalions

APPENDIX 1

The Chief of the SS Main Office — Berlin the 9th March 1936

IA/O Tgbr. Nr. 01462/36

Subject: SS Guard Formation insignia

Ref: Verf. IA/O Nr. 01294 of the 18.3.35.

Distributor V

A) Collar patches: Worn on the right collar patch by:

1) Members of the SS Death's Head companies (Hundertschaften), an aluminium embroidered death's head with underneath the number of the company (arabic numerals 1 to 25).
2) Members of the battalion staff, an aluminium death's head with underneath the number of the battalion (roman numerals I-V).
3) SS leaders up to and incl. the rank of SS-Ostubaf. on the staff of a camp commandant, an aluminium embroidered death's head with underneath the letter K.
4) Non-commissioned ranks on the staff of a camp commandant, an aluminium embroidered K, and on the lower right sleeve a four-sided badge (Raute) with an aluminium embroidered death's head. The badge is edged in aluminium-black twisted cord.
5) Members of the medical battalion, an aluminium embroidered death's head with underneath the letter S.
   SS leaders who are qualified doctors also wear on the lower left sleeve the existing four-sided badge (Raute) with an aluminium embroidered Aesculapius rod.
   N.C.O.'s and men of the Medical Battalion qualified as orderlies wear on the lower left sleeve the existing four-sided badge (Raute) with a black silk embroidered Aesculapius rod.
6) Members of the staff of the Leaders of SS Guard Formations, an aluminium embroidered death's head.
   Leaders with the rank of SS-Staf. and above on the staff of a camp commandant or serving with the battalions wear on the lower left sleeve a four-sided badge (Raute) with an aluminium embroidered death's head. The badge is not edged.

B) Armbands: worn with aluminium stripes:

1) Members of the camp commandant's staff and the SS Guard Formations wear armbands with the following inscriptions:

Camp	Armband
Dachau	Oberbayern
Esterwegen	Ostfriesland
Lichtenburg	Elbe
Sachsenburg	Sachsen
Columbia-Oranienburg	Brandenburg

2) Members of the Medical Battalion wear an armband with the inscription "Sanitätsabteilung".

3) N.C.O.'s and men on the staff of the Leader of the SS Guard Formations wear an armband with the inscription "SS-Hauptamt".

C) Drill and guard dress:

1) Members of the SS Guard Formations wear the earth-brown uniform with brassard and collar patches when drilling and on guard duty. In the field the brassard may be removed. Personnel on the camp commandant's staff may wear the earth-brown uniform on duty. Sentries on public streets or squares will continue to wear the black service uniform. The wearing of the earth-brown uniform as a walking-out dress is forbidden.

2) SS leaders wear the same shoulder straps as the SS-Verfügungstruppe on the earth-brown uniform, but without badges.
N.C.O.'s and men wear plain earth-brown shoulder straps.

3) SS leaders, SS-Hauptschar. and SS-Oberscharführer wear the regulation knot (Portepee) on their side-arm. Other N.C.O.'s wear the black and white interwoven sword knot (Säbeltroddel), on white fabric strap with black stripes.
SS men up to the rank of SS-Rottenführer wear a black and white interwoven sword knot (Säbeltroddel) on black fabric strap with white stripes.

D) General:

1) Death's head collar patches may be obtained only from the Leader of the SS Guard Formations. The announcements in the "Mitteilungsblatt der RZM" are to be discontinued.

2) The Leader of the SS Guard Formations obtains the collar patches directly from the SS Administrative Office against payment.

3) All private manufacture of death's head collar patches and the wearing of the same will be punished by SS law.

4) The Requisition order of the Chief of the SS Main Office IA/10 Nr. 01294 of the 18.3.35, ceases, with the publication of this order, to be valid.

The Chief of the SS Main Office
sgd.
SS-Gruppenführer

APPENDIX 2

Development of the SS Death's Head Formations 1935-1937[1]

Monat	KL Dachau	KL Esterwegen	KL Lichtenburg	KL Sachsenburg	KL Columbia	KL Brandenburg	San./Abt. ff/TV.	Stab J.KL u. ff/TV.	Gesamt[1]
1935									
Januar	838	368	335	380	61	—	—	5	**1 987**
Februar	837	371	328	372	63	—	—	6	**1 977**
März	844	366	313	411	59	—	—	5	**1 998**
April	778	355	347	388	26	194	—	5	**2 093**
Mai	774	359	348	389	29	337	—	5	**2 241**
Juni	764	356	341	390	27	336	—	6	**2 220**
Juli	772	359	352	403	23	336	—	7	**2 252**
August	812	364	358	404	24	304	—	7	**2 273**
September	855	356	355	405	26	334	—	7	**2 338**
Oktober	856	352	358	469	28	338	—	10	**2 411**
November	974	362	358	474	29	342	—	11	**2 550**
Dezember	971	360	359	473	27	345	—	11	**2 546**
1936									
Januar	1 034	359	381	623	27	420	—	11	**2 855**
Februar	1 033	358	402	548	27	439	—	11	**2 818**
März	996	358	405	531	22	373	37	11	**2 733**
	Neugliederung ab 1. April 1936								
	I./ff-TV. Oberbayern	II./ff-TV. Oldenburg	III./ff-TV. Sachsen	IV./ff-TV. Ostmark	V./ff-TV. Brandenburg				
April	871	355	487	391	475	—	46	36	35	83	22	—	4	47	24	**2 876**
Mai	847	539	536	482	497	—	46	36	35	83	23	—	4	69	25	**3 222**
Juni	881	571	534	538	508	—	45	36	35	83	26	—	5	74	23	**3 359**
Juli	1 008	597	531	533	498	—	44	36	35	82	33	—	7	73	25	**3 502**
August	1 009	607	527	531	493	—	44	36	35	81	33	—	7	75	28	**3 506**
September	1 021	624	521	530	512	—	—	35	35	81	31	44	8	76	30	**3 548**
Oktober[2]	947	618	496	488	531	—	—	34	35	85	30	40	9	74	28	**3 415**
November	1 038	628	491	513	530	—	—	37	34	86	—	70	9	76	29	**3 541**
Dezember	1 041	640	492	521	521	—	—	37	34	88	—	70	10	79	32	**3 565**
1937									
Januar	1 044	636	525	542	536	—	—	37	34	87	—	67	10	78	30	**3 626**
Februar	1 019	620	510	541	570	77	—	35	35	88	—	68	10	78	31	**3 682**
März	996	618	512	537	566	77	—	35	34	89	—	68	10	76	31	**3 649**
April	1 021	616	496	551	571	77	—	36	34	88	—	68	10	77	31	**3 676**
Mai	1 061	656	498	550	552	79	—	37	36	89	—	72	10	78	35	**3 753**
Juni	1 229	672	486	563	610	78	—	41	37	89	—	70	9	81	35	**4 000**
	Neugliederung ab 1. Juli 1937															
	1. ff/TV. Oberbayern		2. ff/TV. Brandenburg		3. ff/TV. Thüringen											
Juli	1 473		1 375		1 180		—	40	37	87	—	68	9	144	36	**4 449**
						Neugliederung ab 1. August 1937										
						KL Buchenwald		KL Dachau		KL Sachsenhausen						
August	1 428		1 391		1 116	120		121		111				152	43	**4 482**
September	1 492		1 394		1 107	119		122		115				153	43	**4 545**
Oktober	1 630		1 547		1 169	118		123		114				154	52	**4 907**
November	1 630		1 560		1 080	109		117		115				151	52	**4 814**
Dezember	1 621		1 617		1 066	112		116		109				143	49	**4 833**

[1] Männer und Anwärter. Ohne ff/Zugehörige. [2] Seit Oktober 1936 werden in den Totenkopfverbänden auch ff/Zugehörige geführt.

Statistiches Jahrbuch der SS der NSDAP, 1937, p. 51.

APPENDIX 3

Overall composition and monthly strength of the SS Death's Head Formations 1938[2]

Monat	1./T.St. Oberbayern	2./T.St. Brandenburg	3./T.St. Thüringen	4./T.St. Ostmark	KL Buchenwald	KL Dachau	KL Flossenbürg	KL Lichtenburg	KL Mauthausen	KL Sachsenhausen	San. Abt. ff-T.St.	Stab F.KL u. ff-T.St.	Truppenverwaltungsamt	Stabsnachrichtenzug ff-TV.	Gesamt
Anwärter															
Januar	1 050	1 062	444	—	10	4	—	—	—	11	35	10	—	—	**2 625**
Februar	1 030	1 129	435	—	10	4	—	—	—	10	40	9	—	—	**2 667**
März	1 017	925	633	—	7	4	—	—	—	9	41	7	—	—	**2 643**
April	2 550	1 840	605	—	5	4	—	—	—	10	41	7	—	—	**5 062**
Mai	2 418	2 353	565	—	5	4	—	—	—	14	36	7	—	—	**5 402**
Juni	2 252	1 765	1 387	—	4	3	—	—	—	14	32	6	—	—	**5 463**
Juli	2 252	1 765	1 387	—	4	3	—	—	—	14	32	6	—	—	**5 463**
August	1 773	1 693	1 288	479	4	5	2	—	1	8	37	1	—	—	**5 291**
September	1 773	1 693	1 288	479	4	5	2	—	1	8	37	1	—	—	**5 291**
Oktober	1 773	1 693	1 288	479	4	5	2	—	1	8	37	1	—	—	**5 291**
November	1 693	1 903	1 229	700	5	5	6	—	8	16	50	6	—	12	**5 733**
Dezember	1 693	1 903	1 329	700	5	5	6	—	8	16	50	6	—	12	**5 733**
Männer															
Januar	603	562	634	—	100	112	—	9	—	98	107	40	—	—	**2 262**
Februar	596	565	596	—	99	111	—	12	—	96	114	29	—	—	**2 228**
März	610	495	668	—	94	113	—	15	—	98	123	40	—	—	**2 255**
April	563	467	602	—	107	116	—	15	—	99	119	41	—	—	**2 129**
Mai	637	461	611	—	118	124	—	17	—	119	125	41	—	—	**2 253**
Juni	719	470	605	—	127	126	—	17	—	114	127	41	—	—	**2 346**
Juli	719	470	605	—	127	126	—	17	—	114	127	41	—	—	**2 346**
August	574	495	600	149	120	129	29	17	6	116	139	43	—	—	**2 417**
September	574	495	600	149	120	129	29	17	6	116	139	43	—	—	**2 417**
Oktober	574	495	600	149	120	129	29	17	6	116	139	43	—	—	**2 417**
November	632	593	612	154	129	122	38	19	57	144	155	38	35	23	**2 751**
Dezember	632	593	612	154	129	122	38	19	57	144	155	38	35	23	**2 751**
Zugehörige															
Januar	145	126	184	—	5	7	—	—	—	5	10	1	—	—	**483**
Februar	145	126	182	—	5	7	—	—	—	5	10	1	—	—	**481**
März	145	121	177	—	5	7	—	—	—	5	10	1	—	—	**471**
April	222	175	228	—	7	7	—	—	—	5	11	1	—	—	**656**
Mai	220	175	228	—	7	7	—	—	—	5	11	1	—	—	**654**
Juni	219	175	228	—	7	7	—	—	—	5	11	1	—	—	**653**
Juli	219	175	228	—	7	7	—	—	—	5	11	1	—	—	**653**
August	217	174	227	—	7	7	—	—	—	5	11	1	—	—	**649**
September	217	174	227	—	7	7	—	—	—	5	11	1	—	—	**649**
Oktober	217	174	227	—	7	7	—	—	—	5	11	1	—	—	**649**
November	197	199	235	13	8	6	1	—	1	12	13	1	—	2	**688**
Dezember	197	199	235	13	8	6	1	—	1	12	13	1	—	2	**688**
Insgesamt															
Januar	1 798	1 750	1 262	—	115	123	—	9	—	111	152	51	—	—	**5 371**
Februar	1 771	1 820	1 213	—	114	122	—	12	—	111	164	49	—	—	**5 376**
März	1 772	1 541	1 478	—	106	124	—	15	—	112	174	48	—	—	**5 370**
April	3 335	2 482	1 435	—	119	127	—	15	—	114	171	49	—	—	**7 847**
Mai	3 275	2 989	1 404	—	130	135	—	17	—	138	172	49	—	—	**8 309**
Juni	3 190	2 410	2 220	—	138	136	—	17	—	133	170	48	—	—	**8 462**
Juli	3 190	2 410	2 220	—	138	136	—	17	—	133	170	48	—	—	**8 462**
August	2 564	2 362	2 115	628	131	141	31	17	7	129	187	45	—	—	**8 357**
September	2 564	2 362	2 115	628	131	141	31	17	7	129	187	45	—	—	**8 357**
Oktober	2 564	2 362	2 115	628	131	141	31	17	7	129	187	45	—	—	**8 357**
November	2 522	2 695	2 176	867	142	133	45	19	66	172	218	45	35	37	**9 172**
Dezember	2 522	2 695	2 176	867	142	133	45	19	66	172	218	45	35	37	**9 172**

Statistiches Jahrbuch der SS der NSDAP, 1938, p. 79.

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ERRATA & ADDENDA (Second Edition)

Page 1 Second para, line 2: the first SS-run concentration camp was established in March 1933.
Third para, line 4: Theodor Eicke became commandant of Dachau concentration camp in June 1933, not 1935 as stated; and Oberführer is misspelt.
The photograph shows Eicke as an SS-Gruppenführer, the rank to which he was promoted on 11 July 1934 and held until he became commander of the SS-Totenkopf-Division with the rank of SS-Obergruppenführer in October 1939.

Page 2 Right column, line 8: the building which housed a holding and interrogation centre had been the German office of the American film company Columbia Pictures, but the building itself was called Columbus Haus. It was guarded by the Prussian Poice.

Page 4 Right column, line 17: should read 'Führer vom Dienst'.

Page 5 Line 7: should read 'KL mit SS-Totenkopfsturmbann mit . . .'
Line 12: should read '3.Kp Flossenburg/Bayr.Ostmark'.
The photograph of Karl Otto Koch was taken some time after his promotion to SS-Obersturmbannführer on 9 November 1936.

Page 6 Line 8: should read 'Gerät'.

Page 9 Left column, line 6: It now appears that the 'W' collar patch was never issued, and instead one with a double-armed swastika motif was authorised by Himmler in August 1944. (SS-WVHA, Amtsgruppenchef D, A V/4 Az.: Tgb.Nr.759/44 Geh., Uniformenspiegel). At least one aged SS guard taken prisoner by the British at Bergen-Belsen was wearing this collar patch in April 1945, as confirmed by an Imperial War Museum photograph. See Roger James Bender & Hugh Page Taylor, *Uniforms, Organisation and History of the Waffen-SS* Vol. 5, pp. 38–39 & 110–112 for wear of this patch by at least one Latvian.
Right column, footnote 9: Statistiches Jahrbuch der SS der NSDAP, 1937, p. 51.
Footnote 32: See also A V/4 Az.: 23bl2Ma/F.Tgb.Nr.539/44 Geh.

Page 12 Line 5: should read 'Verstärkten'.

Page 13 The photograph dates from prior to Eicke's promotion to SS-Gruppenführer in July 1934.
Line 1: Eicke took over command of Dachau in June 1933 and remained commandant until he became Inspector of Concentration Camps in July 1934.

Page 16 The SS-Obersturmbannführer in this photograph is Ritter von Hengl; see Volume 3, p. 11 for portrait.

Page 18 Line 12: should read: 'Kompanie Leiner'.

Page 20 Left column, third para: heading should read: 'SS-Pioniereinheit z.b.V.(t-mot.)'.
In the caption the correct spelling is 'SS-Brigadeführer Schäfer'.

Page 21 'Trawnikimänner' wore a variety of uniforms at differnt times, the most common of which was the field-grey of the Sipo and SD (see Volume 5, pp. 27-32). Since the officers were German they wore SS badges of rank, while non-commissioned officers wore black cloth shoulder straps with one, two or three transverse aluminium lace bars according to rank in the Russian manner.

Page 26 Line 10: the first death's head collar patch was introduced on 31 March 1936. See National Archives microfilm series T-175, roll 155, frame 5047.

Page 27 Left column, line 2: should read: 'Allgemeine-SS and SS-TV (Verfügungstruppe)'.

Page 28 Footnote should read: National Archives microfilm series T-175, roll 155, frame nos. 268484-97. The document in question is dated 14 June 1937.
In the note marked by an asterisk the plural of 'Sturm' should be 'Stürme'; and Totenkopfsturmbanne is misspelt.

Page 30 Right column, line 26: 'Württembergischen' is misspelt.

Page 34 Left column, footnote 3. The correct sequence of emblems worn on the shoulder straps was not known when the first edition of this book went to press. At first there was no emblem; then, from July 1937, Arabic numerals, until the introduction of Gothic letters in 'old-silver' (bronze) for officers, white metal for N.C.O.s, and silver-grey machine embroidery for other ranks. With the formation of the 4th SS-Totenkopf-Standarte 'Ostmark' in April 1938 it was decided to give the Gothic 'O' to 'Ostmark' and a metal death's head to 'Oberbayern'. By the outbreak of war regimental numbers in Arabic numerals were once again being worn on shoulder straps. This chronology applies to the other two regiments, except that they each retained their original 'B' and 'T' regimental cyphers.

Page 39 Plate 9, fig 4: this armband was worn by both the SS-Verfügungstruppe and the SS-Totenkopfverbände. The difference lay in the SS-VT version being one word, while that for the SS-TV was hyphenated.

Page 42 Marksmanship badges: two examples of these badges exist in private collections; both are in hallmarked silver, bearing on the reverse the name of the Munich jeweller and silversmith Otto Gahr. To muddy the waters even further, the author has in his collection a blank citation for the 'SS-Schützenschnur' (lanyard) designed by P. Casberg. No other evidence has come to light to confirm the existence of this type of award.
Right column, line 6: should read 'SS-Waffenwart'.
Line 7: should read 'Berlin-Lichtenberg'.
Lines 18–21: should be replaced by following:

'Field officers (SS-Stubaf. & above)	3 stripes
Company officers (SS-Ustuf.-SS-Hstuf.)	2 stripes
N.C.O.s (Unterführer)	1 stripe'.

Page 43 The two knots illustrated are in fact bayonet knots although they are described as 'Sabeltroddel' in Appendix 3, p. 49. In passing I should

mention that extremely good copies of SS sword and bayonet knots appeared on the market in 1990.

Page 46 On page 94 of Volume 3 of this series there is a photograph of a Standard-bearer's bandolier used by the SS-Verfügungstruppe and later Waffen-SS. It is known that the SS-TV used the Allgemeine-SS pattern, introduced in 1937. Recently a number of Allgemeine-SS bandoliers were discovered in a Czech film studio, and it is now possible to give the following description. Whereas the SS-VT pattern was identical to that of the German Army, the Allgemeine-SS version had two rows of 1 cm-wide lace of special pattern, with a 1 cm space between them, which left a 0·5 cm space between the two double rows of lace. There are no other differences.

Page 48 Right column, line 10 collar patches bearing the death's head and Arabic numerals '27' do exist in private collections.

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

Uniforms of the SS, Volume 1: Allgemeine-SS, 1923–1945
Uniforms of the SS, Volume 2: Germanische-SS, 1940–1945
Uniforms of the SS, Volume 3: SS-Verfügungstruppe, 1933–1939